Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru

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Second Series

Volume One

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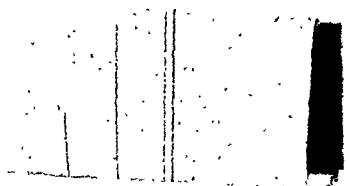
General Editor

S. Gopal

FOREWORD

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the key figures of the twentieth century. He symbolised some of the major forces which have transformed our age.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was young, history was still the privilege of the West; the rest of the world lay in deliberate darkness. The impression given was that the vast continents of Asia and Africa existed merely to sustain their masters in Europe and North America. Jawaharlal Nehru's own education in Britain could be interpreted, in a sense, as an attempt to secure for him a place within the pale. His letters of the time are evidence of his sensitivity, his interest in science and international affairs as well as of his pride in India and Asia. But his personality was veiled by his shyness and a facade of nonchalance, and perhaps outwardly there was not much to distinguish him from the ordinary run of men. Gradually there emerged the warm and universal being who became intensely involved with the problems of the poor and the oppressed in all lands. In doing so, Jawaharlal Nehru gave articulation and leadership to millions of people in his own country and in Asia and Africa.

That imperialism was a curse which should be lifted from the brows of men, that poverty was incompatible with civilisation, that nationalism should be poised on a sense of international community and that it was not sufficient to brood on these things when action was urgent and compelling—these were the principles which inspired and gave vitality to Jawaharlal Nehru's activities in the years of India's struggle for freedom and made him not only an intense nationalist but one of the leaders of humanism.

No particular ideological doctrine could claim Jawaharlal Nehru for its own. Long days in jail were spent in reading widely. He drew much from the thought of the East and West and from the philosophies of the past and the present. Never religious in the formal sense, yet he had a deep love for the culture and tradition of his own land. Never a rigid Marxist, yet he was deeply influenced by that theory and was particularly impressed by what he saw in the Soviet Union on his first visit in 1927. However, he realised that the world was too complex, and man had too many facets, to be encompassed by any single or total explanation. He himself was a socialist with an abhorrence of regimentation and a democrat who was anxious to reconcile his faith in civil liberty with the necessity of mitigating economic and social wretchedness. His struggles, both within himself and with the outside world, to adjust such seeming contradictions are what make his life and work significant and fascinating.

As a leader of free India, Jawaharlal Nehru recognised that his country could neither stay out of the world nor divest itself of its own interests in world affairs. But to the extent that it was possible, Jawaharlal Nehru sought to speak objectively and to be a voice of sanity in the shrill phases of the 'cold war'. Whether his influence helped on certain occasions to maintain peace is for the future historian to assess. What we do know is that for a long stretch of time he commanded an international audience reaching far beyond governments, that he spoke for ordinary, sensitive, thinking men and women around the globe and that his was a constituency which extended far beyond India.

So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the 'third world' as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote. There is, as is to be expected in the speeches and writings of a man so engrossed in affairs and gifted with expression, much that is ephemeral; this will be omitted. The official letters and memoranda will also not find place here. But it is planned to include everything else and the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being.

Indira Gandhi

Chairman
Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 2 September 1946, the Congress formed the Interim Government and Nehru was sworn in as Member in charge of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. He was also to serve as Vice-President of the Executive Council. With the assumption of office, a new phase in Nehru's life began; and the Second Series of the *Selected Works* concerns his activities from September 1946 to May 1964. Purely official statements and letters, often drafted by others and not bearing the mark of Nehru's personality or style, have been omitted.

This first volume covers the months from September 1946 to January 1947, which formed a period of intricate constitutional debate, intensified political activity and mounting communal tension. The talks on the constitutional problem in London in December 1946 did not help in improving matters and the Constituent Assembly met without the participation of the League. The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, clearly prejudiced against the Congress, hampered the efforts of Nehru and his colleagues to function effectively, and brought the Muslim League into the Interim Government on 26 October 1946 without securing explicit commitments from its leaders that they accepted the Cabinet Mission plan in full. So the League set itself to wreck the Interim Government from within while its ministry in Bengal connived at growing violence and communal rioting. But the situation in Bihar was brought under control by the joint efforts of the representatives of the Congress and the League in the Interim Government.

Some of the material of this volume has been selected from the papers of Jawaharlal Nehru. Shrimati Indira Gandhi has made available to us a large number of documents in her possession, and these papers have been referred to in the footnotes as the J.N. Collection. The letters in 126 bound volumes in the Nehru Memorial Library are cited as the J.N. Correspondence. Some other letters and notes, kept separately, are categorized as the J.N. Papers.

The Nehru Memorial Library has been good enough to provide access to all the relevant collections in its custody. The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office in London has permitted reprinting of some documents published in Volumes VIII and IX of *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*. The India Office Library in London and the United States National Archives at Washington have allowed the printing of some material in their custody. The President's and Prime Minister's Secretariats, the Ministry of Law and the National Archives of India have authorized the reproduction of some

notes and letters in their possession. A few items in *Sardar Patel's Correspondence* and in the volume of documents, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1946*, have also been included.

The late Shri Pyarelal kindly gave us permission to consult his personal collection. *The Hindustan Times, The Searchlight, Hindusthan Standard, National Herald, The Statesman, The Hindu, Amrit Bazar Patrika, The Free Press Journal* and *The Bombay Chronicle* have allowed us to reprint the texts of speeches and statements published by them.

The biographical footnotes and glossaries in the First Series of the *Selected Works* are not repeated; but references to biographical footnotes in those volumes are given in the index in italics. Four items, traced recently, have been included in the appendix. Three of them belong chronologically to a volume in the First Series of the *Selected Works.*

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.F.P.F.L.	Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (Burma)
A.G.G.	Agent to the Governor-General
A.H.Q.	Army Headquarters
A.I.C.C.	All India Congress Committee
A.I.S.P.C.	All India States' People's Conference
C.A.	Constituent Assembly
C.C.C.	Coordination Committee of the Viceroy's Executive Council
C.R. Department	Commonwealth Relations Department
D.C.I.	Defence Committee of India
E.A.D.	External Affairs Department
H.M.G.	His Majesty's Government
I.C.S.	Indian Civil Service
I.E.F.C.	International Emergency Food Council
I.G.	Inspector-General
I.N.A.	Indian National Army
I.O.L.R.	India Office Library and Records
I.P.S.	Indian Police Service
M.L.A.	Member of the Legislative Assembly
M.P.C.C.	Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee
N.M.M.L.	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
N.W.F.P.	North-West Frontier Province
P.C.C.	Provincial Congress Committee
P.I.C.A.O.	Provisional International Civil Aviation Organisation
P.M.S.	Prime Minister's Secretariat
P.N.I. (New)	Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia
T.V.A.	Tennessee Valley Authority
U.P.	United Provinces
U.P.P.C.C.	United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee

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THE CONGRESS ORGANISATION

1. To Damodar Swarup Seth[1]

New Delhi
10th September 1946

Dear Comrade,
I have received your letter of the 9th September.[2] I rather hesitate to give any rulings as Congress President in my present capacity. Presumably, some changes will be made in the Congress Presidentship at the next A.I.C.C. meeting.

However, as you have referred the matter to me, I am giving you my opinion below, both as Congress President and as a member of the U.P.P.C.C.

It has long been our convention that the Executive Council of the Provincial Congress Committee should function as a Cabinet with joint responsibility. No member of the Council can vote against a decision of the Council in full P.C.C. meeting or elsewhere. He should not publicly oppose or criticise a decision of the executive. If that is so, it is still more obvious that no member of the executive, so long as he is a member of that executive, can bring a motion of no-confidence in the Council or in the office-bearers or in the President. If he wants to bring forward such a motion before the full P.C.C. he should first resign from the membership of the Executive Council. After that he is free to bring such a motion or criticise the decisions of the Council or the office-bearers. Shri Shibbanlal Saksena should, therefore, first resign from the Executive Council before he can send any such resolution. It seems to me highly improper for any member to criticise the Executive Council while he remains such a member.

Normally, when a motion of no-confidence is sent in, it should have precedence over other work. Therefore, in the ordinary course, such a motion should be brought forward at the next meeting of the P.C.C. But according to the rules of the P.C.C. such a motion must be considered at a meeting specially called for this purpose. Also, the Council has definitely passed a resolution that such a special meeting should be convened in October next at Lucknow for the purpose of considering a motion of no-confidence. For practical reasons also, it seems to me undesirable that such a resolution should be considered at a meeting convened for the purpose of forming a reception committee for the next Congress session. It is quite possible that a discussion on this resolution may interfere very seriously with the real work before the P.C.C., that is, the formation of a reception committee. This

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Damodar Swarup Seth, President of the U.P.P.C.C., had asked Nehru for a ruling on whether a no-confidence motion against the office-bearers of the P.C.C. sent by Shibbanlal Saksena could be moved at the next meeting of the P.C.C. at Meerut on 26 September 1946.

would come in the way very seriously of arrangements for the next Congress session.

Therefore, I am clearly of opinion that the motion of no-confidence, to which Shri Shibbanlal refers, should not be considered at the Meerut meeting of the P.C.C., but at a subsequent meeting to be held at Lucknow.[3] I would add that the motion of no-confidence can only be accepted for consideration after Shri Shibbanlal Saksena has resigned his membership of the Council.

I suggest that you send a copy of my letter to Shri Shibbanlal Saksena and also place it before the next meeting of the Council and, if necessary, the P.C.C.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. A meeting of the U.P.P.C.C. was held at Lucknow on 21 October 1946. The no-confidence motion was taken up but defeated by 243 to 145 votes.

2. The National Flag[1]

The tricolour is the symbol of India's freedom. How many times we have gathered under this flag and unfurled it. How many times we have fallen, but again marched forward. This is the way nations move forward. We have not yet fully realized our dream. We have got over our foreign enemy, but he is not yet completely crushed. We have yet to get over our internal quarrels and differences and it can only be done through mutual love and toleration.

We have gathered under this flag at a time when a new page in India's history is being turned. At this time we should not forget our basic principle of fighting for the emancipation of 400 million people of our country, raising their standard of living and working for Hindu-Muslim unity and complete freedom.

We have yet to attain our freedom. But we cannot build it on internecine quarrels. This flag which I have hoisted today does not belong to Hindus or Muslims or Christians or Parsis individually, but it belongs to the entire nation. I want that India should be free as early as possible.

1. Speech on the eve of the A.I.C.C. meeting, Delhi, 23 September 1946. *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu*, 24 September 1946.

3. Resignation of the Presidentship[1]

Friends and Comrades, I am relinquishing the Congress Presidentship.[2] I feel ashamed to stand before the Committee and return the honour they bestowed on me. It is not because I have got something bigger, but because I and my colleagues have accepted office which has given us some power to work for the nation, though not complete power. The Working Committee agreed to join the Interim Government because, I believe, that was the desire of the A.I.C.C.[3] It is not possible to convene the A.I.C.C. every time the Working Committee has to take an important decision. Whatever the Working Committee has done would be placed before the A.I.C.C. for ratification.

In the history of the Congress a new step has been taken which is a vital departure from the traditional policy of the Congress. They have taken charge of the major part of the Government of India. Of course, complete independence yet remains to be achieved. The Congress organisation still remains a revolutionary organisation. It struggled hard in the past for the freedom of India and launched many movements. Some eight years ago the Congress decided to accept office in the provinces. After two and a half years the Ministries went out of office. Now the Congress has decided on a step of equal importance, if not greater. Decisions have been taken to participate in the Constituent Assembly and to form an Interim Government. This big decision was obviously influenced by circumstances.

I do not know if it would be proper for members in the Interim Government to be members of the Working Committee as well. Indeed it is difficult for a person to discharge both responsibilities. I do not know what there is in store in the future. May be, there is conflict in store, the future is unpredictable. It is impossible for a person to hold office in the Interim Government and at the same time continue to be Congress President as well. Moreover it is possible that we shall have to wage another struggle for securing freedom and we shall have to be prepared for it. However, these are big questions

1. Inaugural address at the A.I.C.C. session, New Delhi, 23 September 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 24 September 1946 and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25 September 1946.
2. The Congress Working Committee accepted Nehru's resignation from the Presidentship on 25 September but requested him to continue till the election of the new President. J.B. Kripalani took over as President on 21 November at Meerut.
3. The Congress Working Committee, in a resolution adopted on 10 August 1946, reaffirmed its previous decision of 26 June to accept the Cabinet Mission's proposals regarding the constituent assembly and an interim government. This decision was ratified by the A.I.C.C. on 7 July.

which the A.I.C.C. should resolve. There is a resolution on the subject and it is for the House to decide whether to accept it or not.[4]

Three weeks ago the Congress assumed office at the Centre. We entered the Secretariat to find a huge building with any number of rooms where thousands of people worked. It appeared to me that one might stay in that building for years and yet never know what was happening in the other corner. I am in charge of external affairs. India's contacts with foreign countries are growing fast even though she may not yet be completely free. The Interim Government have not yet announced their foreign and domestic policy, but, of course, that policy will be the policy of the A.I.C.C.

The Congress has assumed a great responsibility in forming the Interim Government. We are there to construct a new edifice. And it is for the A.I.C.C. to help us in that task. The whole world is watching the Congress and India. India cannot live in isolation. What happens elsewhere in the world affects us. Similarly the whole world will be affected by our policy.

India will throw in her weight in the cause of peace. She will make her contribution to bring about peace. In doing so she will take an independent stand and not act as a satellite of any Power. India's foreign policy will affect the whole world. India should strive for the liberation of colonial countries. International problems are, of course, intricate and complex. From what one hears as to what is happening in the Paris Peace Conference[5] or at the U.N.O.[6] it all looks like a *chidiakhana*. There is confusion. Just now, however, I am not in a position to correctly assess the state of affairs and India should avoid taking a wrong decision. All the facts are not before us. We, however, realise that the two powerful nations in the world, the United States and Russia, can make and unmake things. They can bring about lasting peace or disaster.

The Communists in India opposed the fundamental policy of the Congress at a critical time in its history. This conflict should not be taken to indicate that India is against Russia, a Communist State. Whatever foreign policy the present Interim Government may formulate it will be that of a free country.

4. Govind Ballabh Pant's resolution, that "no one will be debarred from the membership of the Working Committee or any other body of the Congress on account of his holding office in the Interim Government", was passed by a large majority by the A.I.C.C. on 24 September 1946. See also the following item.
5. Sharp procedural wrangles, besides the differences between the Powers, had dominated the Conference. Most of the recommendations were passed despite the strong opposition in many cases of the Soviet Union and the other participating East European States. Dr. Evatt, the foreign minister of Australia, who objected to the dominance of the Great Powers, abandoned his effort after a few weeks and left the Conference.
6. Of the eight nations seeking admission to the U.N.O., only three—Sweden, Iceland and Afghanistan—were admitted on 29 August 1946. Britain and the United States vetoed the admission of Albania and Mongolia and the Soviet Union that of Eire, Transjordan and Portugal.

Our foreign policy will be for peace in the world. Accordingly in international councils our representatives will work as peace-makers. We are for peace and not for war.

We should have a new Frontier policy. Problems in the tribal areas should be solved differently. The Congress has been all along urging a revision of the policy with regard to the tribal areas.[7] The Congress is opposed to aerial bombing and has condemned it in the past. Now soon after our Government had taken charge we heard that there was bombing on the Frontier. The first information I got on the subject was from Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. I did whatever I could in this regard. I am grateful to Badshah Khan for the timely public statement he issued.[8] The question now remains as to what should be the Interim Government's policy especially with regard to the tribal areas. The old policy was there in existence for over a century. Now that must be changed.

The tribal policy affects the whole of India. Our policy should be that we maintain brotherly and friendly relations with the tribal people. They are not foreigners but our own kith and kin. There is the question of Baluchistan[9] where there is no responsible government. It is a big problem which faces the Interim Government and something must be done immediately.

7. See *Selected Works,* Vol. 8, pp. 465-467.
8. On 6 September, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan declared that Waziristan was subjected to mass aerial bombardment.
9. The Balüchistan Agency consisted of Kalat State and the feudatory States of Las Bela and Kharan. The Kalat State was a confederacy of partially independent chiefs headed by the Khan of Kalat. The Resident and Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan conducted the relations between the Government of India and the Khan and exercised general political supervision through the Political Agent of Kalat.

4. The Interim Government and the Working Committee[1]

Friends, I have to make a few observations on the debate which, I think, has been of a high order. The five members of the Congress Working Committee[2]

1. Speech on the Working Committee resolution at the A.I.C.C., New Delhi, 24 September 1946. From *The Hindustan Times,* 25 September 1946 and *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 26 September 1946.
2. Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari and Sarat Chandra Bose.

who are in the Interim Government now would be ready to resign from either organisation at any time the House wished. I and my four colleagues are in the Interim Government not for personal honour. We are there at the command of Congressmen. In fact if the choice was left to me and my four colleagues, I am sure we would prefer membership of the Congress Working Committee to membership of the Interim Government. Personally, I would like to continue as President of the Congress rather than become a member of the Government. But sometimes men are called upon to do things that give no personal pleasure but have to be undertaken as a duty.

Regarding Munshi Ahmed Din's contention that independence cannot be achieved without a revolution, may I ask, if we have not worked for revolution all these twenty-five years, then what have we been doing? Have we been wasting time in a fruitless errand? Are we in the Interim Government because of the Viceroy's kindness? We are there by right and by our strength.

Revolutionaries in other countries follow the method of breaking down the obstacles first and then rebuilding, whereas we in India under Mahatma Gandhi's guidance have succeeded in rebuilding simultaneously with breaking down obstacles. Revolutionaries in other countries, if they failed to break down the obstacles, broke down themselves in the attempt. That danger did not befall us because our movement is built on sounder foundations.

Congress occupies the present position owing to its strength and by strength I understand action, not speeches.

I do not know where I shall be after two months. Will I be in the Secretariat or in the battlefield? We have to remain alert at all times. Those who talk of revolution talk as if revolution is to come after a few years. I believe that the age of revolution is right here and now.

The result of the vote on the resolution should not be taken to mean a victory for one or the other side.

The two amendments moved yesterday had one common object, namely, to limit the proportion of members of the Interim Government who could be permitted to remain on the Working Committee. That really amounted to accepting the principle of the resolution and going beyond it. I would therefore put to the vote[3] a composite amendment seeking to limit the number of members of the Interim Government who could be members of the Working Committee without specifying the number for the moment.

A resolution has already been passed by the Working Committee on the happenings in Calcutta and elsewhere. I suggest that it is not enough for the Congress to express sympathy with the victims of these happenings; they should do something positive and concrete to prevent a repetition of the happenings.

3. While the original resolution moved by G.B. Pant was passed by 135 votes to 80 the composite amendment presented by Nehru was rejected by an overwhelming majority.

5. Party Organisation and Work[1]

I have been wondering what to tell you. I have not followed the discussion you have carried on here for two hours, but from what I could gather during the few minutes I have been present here, I perceive the gravity of the problems that confront you. Without going into details, I should like to say a few words about them.

For the last 25 years I have had close associations with the Congress organization. It was when I was the Secretary of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee[2] that I gained my first direct knowledge of the day-to-day problems of its organization. Later, when I became the General Secretary[3] and then the President[4] of the Congress my intimacy with the organization and its working grew closer and deeper. But during the last few years I have had no direct contact with the organization. I was, no doubt, regularly attending the A.I.C.C. sessions and the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee meetings, but there was no direct responsibility upon me. The result is that I am not fully aware of the details of the radical changes that have crept into our organization, though I am conscious enough of their general nature and trend. These changes have affected not only the Congress but also the nation at large. The impact of these changes has become increasingly obvious, specially since 1942. But I am sorry to say that many of our colleagues do not recognise these changes and continue to talk as before. They move in the same old way and are oblivious of the changing environments. The world has changed, but not they. As in religion, so in politics we are in danger of losing the vision of the whole in the narrowness of the dogma. Courage and enthusiasm we have in plenty, but what we need is the capacity to keep pace with changing India and the changing world.

For example, look at the wave of strikes[5] in the country. Some of them are justifiable, others are not. We have, however, the habit of putting the blame

1. Speech at the meeting of the Provincial Congress Committees' Presidents and Secretaries held in New Delhi on 24 September 1946. *Congress Bulletin*, 16 October 1946, pp. 7-10 and A.I.C.C. File No. G-64/1946, pp. 84-88, N.M.M.L.
2. Nehru was Secretary of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee from 1921 to 1923.
3. Nehru was General Secretary of the A.I.C.C. from 1923 to 1925.
4. Elected President of the fortyfourth session of the Indian National Congress held at Lahore in 1929.
5. The postal employees went on strike all over India, and there were one-day sympathetic strikes in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta in support of their demand. Railway services were partially disrupted by a strike on the South Indian Railway. Bombay witnessed a widespread sweepers' strike on the day after the assumption of office by the Congress. Employees of the Bengal circle paralysed the work of the Imperial Bank of India. Strikes in other Indian railways and textile industry were averted after protracted negotiations.

on others and complaining that the Communists are instigating the labour to strike. But it is not enough to complain. We have to realize that throwing the blame upon others does not relieve us of our own responsibility in the matter. When we take up a certain cause then there is no room for complaining. Some of us even go to the extent of saying that the fault lies with the masses. It is unworthy to talk like that. If there is a fault, the fault must lie with us.

One thing is obvious to me, which is that the Congress has immensely grown in strength. This strength has grown in two ways, first by our increasing hold over the masses, and second by clearing the obstacles in our way. The only remaining hurdle in the field is the Muslim League and it is no doubt a major obstacle. Other oppositions are insignificant and hardly count. Nevertheless, although the Congress has gained in popularity, it is not yet able to direct the course of events in the country. Whether it is a strike or a riot, the Congress is unable to control it. This makes it obvious that the Congress organisation has not yet adapted itself to the changed circumstances. It still moves in the old ruts.

You want to have a Congress office in every village. That is desirable. This question has been before us for 25 years. The real problem however is not of opening offices but of changing our outlook. You know that when we first came into the field, we had neither an office nor even a building of our own. We used to work in what shelter we could find. Today the Congress has its own buildings and offices. We had nothing of the sort. All we had was our faith and our enthusiasm. Enthusiasm as a rule does not last long, but surprising as it may seem, ours has endured. What I wish to emphasise is that despite its increase in strength, the Congress as yet has no correspondingly increased hold over the course of events in the country. I will not accept the excuse that we tried but could not succeed. For we claim to be revolutionaries, who will change the face of India. In the last resort we are responsible even for what the Muslim League does. If our work among the masses had been more comprehensive, we would have attained fuller success. On my release from jail last year[6] I had declared my readiness to accept the responsibility for what happened after August 1942.[7] If thousands have died in Calcutta it is a measure of our own weakness. If the villages are ravaged by dacoities, the ultimate responsibility is ours. Let us not throw the blame on others.

You will continue your discussion on the problems of Congress reorganization tomorrow. I have no doubt that your discussions will be fruitful. I am not however concerned with their details. There is however one point about which I wish to say something. The formation of the new Interim

6. Nehru was released from Almora District Jail on 15 June 1945.
7. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 14, pp. 23-26.

Government has had its repercussions on the Congress. The Congress has at once gained and lost in strength thereby. We have to be on our guard lest it weakens the very basis of our Congress organization. We must draw a lesson from what is happening in India today. Widespread strikes, food scarcity[8] in Madras and Mysore and the terrible toll of life during the Bengal famine are all chapters in our history which we must study and learn from. Though the responsibility for the Bengal tragedy must be shared between the Central Government of the day and the Muslim League Provincial Government, nevertheless it is a picture which should teach us much and which we must bear in mind. All this makes it plain that the British hold over the country is fast slipping and that they are no longer able to govern it. The British rule is crumbling by its own weakness but before it finally disappears it may leave in its trail a thousand calamities for our people.

I should like you to understand that there is a great deal of difference between the Interim Government and the Provincial Governments formed by the Congress.[9] The difference is not merely quantitative but qualitative. As long as the Central Government was under the British most of the fundamental powers were with them. Even now they have some of these powers but the system is changing and the present state of affairs cannot remain static. British authority must either retire or face a conflict. The present crisis cannot continue. The march of events will force the issue, whether for good or for evil. India has reached a critical phase in her history. Such a state of events cannot remain stationary. A radical change is inevitable. What we see today will not remain unchanged for long; it will not be the same three or six months hence. May be our strength will grow and with it the strength of the Interim Government; may be we shall have to launch another struggle. It is difficult to plan too far ahead, for the shape of things will change from day to day. I cannot say what the Congress will be like six months hence. I can only think in terms of a short-distance programme. We have to be ready for all eventualities, for the time at our disposal is short and we have to meet the challenge of British authority and justify ourselves in the eyes of our own people. Our programme must be suited to the need of the occasion or else

8. In January 1946 the rice crop in North Malabar and the Godavari delta was destroyed by a cyclone, while that in the Tanjore delta suffered owing to the failure of the monsoon. In February scarcity areas were announced in the Bombay, Deccan and other Southern areas. On the basis of 12 oz. daily ration Madras needed to import 1,800,000 tons of grain, Mysore 300,000 tons and Bombay about 400,000 tons.
9. The Provincial Autonomy Scheme under the Government of India Act of 1935 entrusted certain subjects exclusively to the jurisdiction of the Provincial Governments; but other subjects such as defence and external affairs were placed under the control of the Governor-General and Central Ministers. The Interim Government as envisaged by the Cabinet Mission involved the setting up of an All Party Government to carry on the administration while constitution making was in progress. All portfolios were to be held by Indians.

we might fail to carry the people with us. During the civil disobedience movement and the 1942 struggle those who were outside the prison bars met the challenge of the hour with such short-term programmes as they could make.

I want to impress on you that the next few months are very critical and decisive. We must lose no time in putting our organization in order. We must not dissipate our resources in political rivalries and factional loyalties.[10] There is no objection to groups when they represent differences in principles but it is improper to form them on mere personal grounds.

You have seen what has happened recently in Calcutta and Bombay.[11] I shudder when I think of it, not so much because of the deaths of a few thousands—after all death comes to all sooner or later—but because of the manner of their deaths. It is a barbarous, dastardly way in which the innocent were butchered and brother set against brother.

Before I conclude I would ask you to bear in mind two points. There could be nothing more stupid than that we should quarrel among ourselves. Do not in the passion of the moment allow yourselves to be caught in communal quarrels. Finally I would say that it is necessary that the work in the provinces should be conducted efficiently. However efficiently the A.I.C.C. office functions it can do little if the provinces lag behind. Once more I shall say: India is changing, be ready to meet its challenge. *Jai Hind.*

10. The Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc accused the Congress of compromising with the British. The Forward Bloc was opposed to the demand for Pakistan, whereas the younger members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of India denounced the proposal for an Interim Government and a Constituent Assembly. The Radical Democratic Party held that, in order to be fully representative, the Constituent Assembly should be elected on an adult franchise. The Party was critical of both the Congress and the Muslim League.
11. There were communal riots in Calcutta and Bombay.

6. The New Tasks before the Volunteers[1]

I have come to speak to you only for a few minutes. You know for the last twenty years I have been associated with the Congress Volunteer Organisation and now I am very glad to see here some of my old comrades like Dr. Hardikar who took up the job of training the youth as long as 20 years back.

1. Speech at a meeting of the representatives of the Congress Volunteer Organisations and the Presidents and Secretaries of the Provincial Congress Committees held at New Delhi on 25 September 1946. A.I.C.C. File No. G-64/1946, pp. 32-35, N.M.M.L.; also printed in *Congress Bulletin*, 16 October 1946, pp. 11-14.

During this long period we have had sufficient experience regarding the volunteer organisation. Now the time has come when we should make use of that experience. It is true that our labour in the field has not been fully fruitful inasmuch as we do not yet have a strong all India organisation. We have always wanted a big volunteer organisation, but circumstances have prevented us from having one. During the war we resorted to new methods and especially in the United Provinces we intended to train hundreds of thousands of villagers. Our idea was that even if we could not impart full training to our men, we should at least train them to face an external invasion, to protect themselves and others from dacoits, and be generally helpful in all eventualities. Our programme was to train villagers on a large scale, but due to several reasons, we could not achieve our objective. One of the reasons, of course, was that we had no trained instructors. Nonetheless it was a helpful experience and we found the villagers taking interest in the work. I want you to make use of that experience and bring the villagers into the fold of our volunteer organisation. Now, when India is changing, we need a strong volunteer organisation which should not only help in achieving the independence of India, but also in serving the villagers. Such volunteers should do Congress work in the villages, keep the village clean, impart education to the villagers and organise them into volunteer corps. I want the work to be done in such a way that millions of our countrymen should be trained for the purpose I have already explained. For that we will have to open training centres and convey the message to everybody, but I warn you that unless the masses themselves take up this cause, the work cannot be organised on a nationwide scale.

You know, a few months back Major General Shah Nawaz Khan was requested, on behalf of the A.I.C.C., to render help in this connection.[2] We are fortunate to have him amongst us as he is a trained and experienced soldier and is known to everybody. I had long talks with him and he put forth many suggestions. A note was subsequently prepared in connection with the volunteer corps by him[3] and was placed before the Congress Working Committee for consideration. The Congress Working Committee appointed him as the G.O.C., and asked him to prepare a draft constitution. We have before us his suggestions regarding the organisation. In this connection I may add that the provinces will be the strongholds of the organisation and will have the maximum provincial autonomy. We do not want to impose control upon any province. The provinces can organise according to their own facilities, but they must keep in view the vital connection between the

2. On 8 July Presidents and Secretaries of the Provincial Congress Committees from all parts of India assembled at Bombay to organise a volunteer corps under the leadership of Major General Shah Nawaz Khan of the Indian National Army.
3. In his note Shah Nawaz Khan outlined the draft rules for the formation and functioning of the volunteer organisation at the Centre and in the provinces.

central and provincial organisations. They should also abide by the regulations which are to be prepared here. The Provincial G.O.C.s may be appointed by the Congress Working Committee, as General Shah Nawaz has been. In the Working Committee it has been suggested that the President of the Congress should also be the Chief Officer Commanding of the volunteer corps. In my opinion this is very correct. When India is completely independent, the President of the Indian Republic will be the Commander-in-Chief of all the forces. It does not mean that the President should himself be a soldier. The President of the United States of America need not be a soldier, though he is the supreme commander of all the American forces. It is in the interests of the country that a civilian should be at the head of the volunteer organisation. Therefore it is quite to the point that the President of the Congress should be the Chief Officer Commanding.

I would ask you to bear in mind two important factors while considering the suggestions: the desirability of provincial autonomy and, second, the necessity of maintaining connection with the centre and a uniform code of regulations.

I understand that you have seen the note prepared by General Shah Nawaz, and have also put forth certain proposals. I have not seen those proposals, but I am sure that whatever you adopt after due consideration would be proper. Of course, the final decision lies with the Congress Working Committee, but it is quite evident that if you all agree among yourselves, the Congress Working Committee will have no objection to your decisions, provided there is no clash with principles.

As regards the name, in the first note it was suggested as "Congress Volunteer Organisation" or "Hindustani Seva Dal". The latter is quite a fitting name. You may adopt it or, if you like, choose another. It is for you to decide.

I am sure that our Volunteer Organisation will be a success. On the one hand we have with us Shah Nawaz Saheb who has army experience, and on the other all of you are there who have had experience of the Congress volunteer organisation for a long time. There is no doubt that our organisation has nonviolence as its creed, yet unless the discipline of the army and the spirit of the volunteer are blended together, we cannot have a good organisation. Luckily we have an opportunity for a happy blend here.

We must bear in mind that our volunteers in the villages must be given some day-to-day work. Unless they are charged with some such duties as the spread of adult literacy, maintenance of cleanliness in the villages, and affording them protection, and unless they are required to submit regular reports of their work, they will not feel themselves responsible. We are not to confine ourselves to mere enrolment of volunteers; we ought to be able to show some work as well. For that purpose paid inspectors in large numbers will have to be appointed. Our volunteers will, of course, be honorary, but

trainers and instructors will need to be paid. It is for you to consider this programme and decide on the best possible way of keeping the volunteers busy to the benefit of the villagers. I am sure that whatever you will decide will be in the interests of the country. I shall respect your decisions and shall even be prepared to suppress my own opinion in order to go with you as far as possible.

Another problem which we have to face is that in the Congress there are today more than one volunteer organisations. In certain places this activity is coloured by party politics. You must decide that our volunteer corps should be a disciplined body and only those who accept the code of discipline of the volunteer corps should be enrolled as its members.

Just now a delegate asked me what steps should be taken in the States to organise volunteer corps. The delegate has also stated that he comes from Ajmer which is surrounded by many States. The question is very pertinent and I would say that in view of the existence of the Praja Mandals in the States, it would be better for the Congress Committees to consult the Praja Mandal authorities in the matter of organising volunteer corps. I would advise the delegate from Ajmer to build up an organisation in his own province first, and then help the Praja Mandals in the neighbouring States to organise the Praja Mandal volunteer organisations. What relations such volunteer organisations should have with the Congress may be decided in your meeting. *Jai Hind.*

7. To the General Secretaries, A.I.C.C.[1]

New Delhi
September 25, 1946

Dear Comrade,

For reasons that are known to you and were stated by me at the meeting of the A.I.C.C., I am tendering my resignation of the office of President of the Congress. You will kindly place this before the Working Committee and take their directions about the arrangements to be made.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *Congress Bulletin*, 15 October 1946, p. 4; also printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 26 September 1946.

8. Arrangements for Volunteers at the Meerut Session[1]

I have discussed the question of the volunteer organisation for the Meerut Congress with some members of the Reception Committee from Meerut as well as some people specially in charge of volunteer organisation there. Certain difficulties have been pointed out to me and they are worthy of consideration.

It is proposed to have about 1,000 I.N.A. personnel and about 3,500 other volunteers. The I.N.A. men will naturally be commanded by their own officers and will form a unit. The other volunteers will have their own officers. All the volunteers, however, including I.N.A. will necessarily be under some kind of a joint command and under the general direction of the Reception Committee or the sub-committee formed for this purpose. This will not interfere with the internal arrangements of the I.N.A. but will be responsible for their disposition and the kind of work allotted to them.

It is obvious that there cannot be any marked differentiation between I.N.A. people and other volunteers. Any differentiation will give rise to ill-feeling and resentment. Many of our civil volunteers are people used to a certain standard of comfort and yet they have to put up with the arrangements made for all volunteers which mean a lower standard.

Thus we cannot have two separate standards of comfort, equipment or convenience for the I.N.A. men and the non-I.N.A. volunteers. There may be minor differences to suit each group but in the main the two will approximate to each other.

The I.N.A. men, with an army tradition behind them, will probably think that the normal army facilities should be provided for them. This is not possible either financially or otherwise. It should be made perfectly clear to them that they are all volunteers without payment of any kind being made to them and we have to spend as little money as possible because it is public money. Necessarily our financial resources and budget are limited, and if the cost is too heavy we have to reduce the number of our volunteers accordingly.

Among some of the items mentioned in the budget for the I.N.A. men is a sum of Rs. 70,000/- for pocket money. It is not possible for us to give any pocket money to any volunteer. We have never done so in the past and we cannot afford to do so, nor indeed can we pay to some and not to others.

Again it is very difficult for us to provide blankets or beddings for the I.N.A. men because we are not providing them to others. They are all supposed to bring their own beddings. Beds or *charpois* are also difficult to provide for. We either have to provide them for every volunteer or for none, and to

1. Note, New Delhi, 1 October 1946. A.I.C.C. File No. 60/1946, pp. 63-65, N.M.M.L.

provide them for every volunteer would mean a very large sum of money. It would also mean a great deal of labour and collection of material in a short time which is difficult.

I have mentioned one or two matters, but the main thing is that there should be approximation between all classes of volunteers and curtailment of expenses as far as possible. We have to run this Congress with limited resources and we do not want to be entangled in heavy debts.

I.N.A. men are used to army discipline and army ways. This would be of value. At the same time it should be explained to them that we cannot treat the general public in the way the army or the police usually treat them. We cannot be rough with the public. We have to be as friendly and cooperative as possible and treat them as our own comrades and not as a hostile element.

Whenever large numbers of people are gathered together for any kind of work many occasions arise of petty friction. This is bound to happen as between I.N.A. men and other volunteers and as between the volunteers and the public. Every effort should be made to avoid this by following uniform policies and carrying out in a disciplined way the general directions issued from the top. A small committee might be formed to look after these petty matters of friction and to dispose of them as soon as they arise.

While there will be many suitable and competent men looking after arrangements and volunteering in Meerut, I suggest that full advantage should be taken of Major General Shah Nawaz and Dr. N.S. Hardikar, both of whom have great experience in their respective lines. Together they will be able to help greatly. I might add that uniforms should be of khadi only both for I.N.A. men and others.

9. An Independent Sovereign Republic[1]

I move the follwing resolution[2] and appeal to you to pass it unanimously.

> On the eve of the summoning of the Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for India, this Congress declares that it stands for an independent sovereign republic wherein all powers and authority are derived from the people, and for a constitution wherein social objectives are laid down to promote freedom, progress and equal opportunity for all the people of

1. Speech at the subjects committee meeting of the Meerut Congress after handing over the Congress Presidentship to J.B. Kripalani, 21 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 22 November 1946.
2. Notices regarding several amendments to this resolution were given; but on an appeal from the Chair, all were withdrawn and the resolution was carried without dissension.

India, so that this ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full contribution to the promotion of world peace and the progress and welfare of mankind, and directs all Congressmen to work to this end.

This resolution is in the nature of a directive to Congressmen telling them their goal in the Constituent Assembly. It says that the constitution which we frame should be for an independent sovereign republic. It is clear that free India will be a republic and not a monarchy. Though it was well understood, it had never been stated clearly. We have reached a stage when the Constituent Assembly is shortly meeting to frame a constitution for India. There are only two points mentioned in the resolution. The first is that free India will be a republic and the second that it should be a kind of a socialistic constitution.

We must remember that the first problem is the removal of the British Power from India. Other problems come afterwards. On the earlier resolution a number of speeches had been made which were not exactly relevant, for that resolution related to past happenings.

What we have to consider now is what we are going to do tomorrow. Are we to remain in the Interim Government or in the Constituent Assembly? It is worth considering. During the last few weeks there were many occasions when I was on the point of resigning. I do not know what may happen within a week, ten days or a month. But one thing is clear that the freedom with which I used to place my views before the country is no longer there. There are difficulties now. Every time I feel difficulty in frankly expressing my views. So I thought it better to keep quiet. I think I was right.

You should remember that we joined the Interim Government two weeks after the Calcutta happenings and thereafter there was a wave of disturbances throughout the country from Bengal to Bihar and other parts of the country. Congressmen, particularly those in the Interim Government or those holding responsible positions in the Congress, did not get time to sleep. We know that we have not been successful to the extent we had hoped. There were people who criticized us. They have a right to do so. But when we asked them whether we should resign they said 'no'. They thought things would go worse.

Only a few weeks ago I returned from Bihar.[3] I intended to remain there for four hours but remained there for a week. People are criticizing certain statements about me published in the press.[4] These statements are wrong. I

3. On 9 November 1946.
4. On 5 November 1946, Mahatma Gandhi criticized Nehru's action of calling in the military to suppress the riots. On the same day Shyama Prasad Mookerjee accused the Interim Government of threatening to bomb the people of Bihar, which he said was the greatest disservice to the Hindus. On 8 November 1946, the students of Patna University demonstrated against Nehru's visit to Bihar.

WITH J.B. KRIPALANI AT MEERUT, NOVEMBER 1946

ADDRESSING THE CONGRESS SESSION, MEERUT, NOVEMBER 1946

never advocated bombing of the people. I only said that if the army took charge of the situation it would deal with the situation as it thought necessary.

When the Viceroy invited me to form the Interim Government, I wrote to him that I was prepared to form the Government in my capacity as the Congress President. Though there was no constitutional provision in the Government of India Act, he agreed. He suggested that it would be better to have an agreement with the League. I told him that we wanted the League to come in and offered Mr. Jinnah five seats. Letters were later exchanged between the Viceroy and Mr. Jinnah and every effort was made to disturb the new constitutional position. In the end, five Muslim League nominees entered the Interim Government.[5] About two months earlier, I had placed similar proposals before Mr. Jinnah. They were then rejected, but he accepted the same offer later from the Viceroy.

Before their coming in, we made it clear that we entered the Government on the principle of joint responsibility. At the time of the entry of the Muslim League, these issues were raised by us and we were given the assurances that

(1) In future, Government will work as a team.
(2) If the Muslim League joins the Interim Government it will accept the Constituent Assembly and the long-term plan.

The Viceroy gave us the necessary assurances. He said that it was clear that the Government would work as a team and as a cabinet[6] and on the second question the Viceroy said that no one could enter the Interim Government as long as the long-term plan was not accepted by it. Letters were again exchanged. Mr. Jinnah's replies were vague.

As soon as the League came into the Interim Government they changed the procedure. The cabinet system began to break down. The Leaguers said that they were a separate bloc.[7] If there are blocs in a Government how can it work? Our plea was that interference by the Viceroy should be the minimum. I had written to Mr. Jinnah that we should agree between ourselves and should not approach the Viceroy.[8] But instead of that every effort was made by the

5. Liaquat Ali Khan, I.I. Chundrigar, Abdur Rab Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Jogendra Nath Mandal.
6. "As you know, I wish to encourage union in the Cabinet in every way. I am most anxious that the Cabinet should work as a team and I hope we shall be able to achieve this". Wavell to Nehru, 5 October 1946.
7. In a letter to the Viceroy dated 13 October 1946, Jinnah maintained that the "decision" was contrary to the declaration of August 8, 1940, but "for various reasons" his Committee had "come to the conclusion" that it would be "fatal to leave the entire field of administration of the Central Government in the hands of the Congress" and moreover the Interim Government might include Muslims who would not command the "respect and confidence of Muslim India". For these and "other very weighty grounds and reasons", they had decided to nominate five members of the Executive Council to represent the Muslim League.
8. See *post*, section 3 (II), items 19 and 20.

Leaguers to take the help of the British Government and oppose the national struggle.

The aim of the British was to make the Muslim League into a "king's party". The British Government's policy is that the Muslim League should be exploited for their selfish ends. These things became clear to us. Permanent services, particularly the British officials, supported them. They think that they are the rulers of the Indian people and that Congress and League come and go. The Congress has been fighting for the removal of the British Government. So there is anti-Congress feeling among British bureaucrats. Since the League is also against the Congress, there is a mental alliance between the two.

During the past few weeks things have gone to such an extent that we were on the point of resigning. I had to tell the Viceroy on two occasions that we wanted to resign from the Government. I do not know what will happen in future but this much I want to tell you that if the present state of affairs continues a struggle is imminent whether we are in the Interim Government or outside it. There is a conflict of ideologies. I want to say that our patience is strained to the breaking point and if these things continue they will lead to a big struggle.

It was clear from Mr. Jinnah's statements that the League entered the Government not to work it but because they feared they would be weakened if they kept out.[9] It was also clear from Mr. Jinnah's letters to the Viceroy that the League did not accept the Statement of May 16.[10] If so, how could they continue in the Interim Government?

It is absurd to go on breaking promises so often and expect that Government will go on. The Viceroy is gradually removing the wheels of the car. In any case, the situation is critical, but nevertheless we must stay in the Interim Government, though one cannot say how long.

Mr. Jinnah has tried to get the Constituent Assembly postponed *sine die*.[11] If it is so postponed now, it may be said to be postponed for ever.

I am not enamoured of this Constituent Assembly. But we have accepted it

9. On 14 November, Jinnah said: "...we shall certainly resist any attempt which directly or indirectly prejudices or militates against our demand for Pakistan". He said the Muslim League members were "sentinels" who would watch Muslim interests and help in the "day-to-day administration".
10. For example, on 17 November 1946 Jinnah wrote to Wavell contesting the Congress claim that it had accepted the statement of 16 May, and expressed his inability to summon the Council of the Muslim League to communicate their acceptance of the British Government's statement in view of the "planned ruthless massacres of the Muslims" in Bihar.
11. Since Jinnah's demand for the postponement of the Constituent Assembly was not adhered to, he issued a statement on 21 November 1946 in which he declared that as the Viceroy had decided to summon the Assembly irrespective of the adverse circumstances, no representative of the Muslim League would participate in it.

and should make the best use of it for our benefit. I do not expect that this will be the last Constituent Assembly. When we attain freedom, we shall have another Constituent Assembly.

One good thing about this Assembly is that the British have no direct representation though we cannot prevent their indirect representation in it.[12] If we do not hold the Constituent Assembly now, the atmosphere will deteriorate. The League is welcome to join the Constituent Assembly. But let me make it clear that whether they come in or keep out, we shall go on. We will go to the Constituent Assembly fully prepared and fully organized, to establish an independent republic. We are not going in to fight over petty things.

12. The provision made in Section C of the Cabinet Mission plan for the representation of the Europeans of Bengal and Assam in the Constituent Assembly gave them disproportionate weightage which might influence the issue of whether or not a Group should be formed in North-East India. On 15 June 1946, the Bengal Europeans decided not to seek representation in the Constituent Assembly.

10. A Growing, Dynamic India[1]

If you ask me today whether I shall still continue to be in the Interim Government ten days hence, I cannot tell you. The picture is changing rapidly every day. But this much is certain. The wise and mighty British Government has been uprooted from the soil of our motherland. It cannot take its root here again. Every Englishman knows this well. May be he has still some capacity left in him to do some mischief these days, his last days. But deep down in his heart, he knows that in India his day has ended. Of the future, we need not despair. The dark and fallen days of India are over. Our country is bound to emerge as one of the greatest powers in the world. It cannot remain small and insignificant.

Beware of the damage—not so much physical, which is not so dangerous—to our minds and hearts that the Englishman will wreak whilst quitting. He may produce such a dangerous ulcer on our minds and hearts that it may take very long to heal. We have to fight this danger. We have to meet the mischief. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty and we must be constantly vigilant.

1. Address to the delegates and Congress workers from U.P. at the Meerut session of the Congress, 22 November 1946. From *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times*, 24 November 1946.

The present disturbances throughout the country are a new, horrible and gruesome phenomenon. I would advise you not to let the cement of idealism and noble aspirations which unites you with the masses fall off from you. You should keep constant contact with the masses—the worker, the peasant, the rickshawpuller. It would be very dangerous if we let doubts grip the minds of those unsophisticated folks about the Congress. We must work among them as a whole for their welfare.

Even these disturbances occurring on a gigantic and new scale are signs of a growing, dynamic India, an India that has long been kept in bondage and is now bursting and bubbling with life. We must take care that this tremendous flood of energy is canalised in right and useful directions and not wasted in self-destruction. There is a new ferment and a new spirit pervading our country today. We must not rest on our hard-won laurels, nor let self-complacency grip our ranks. We must not be static, but keep pace with the march of time. We should be up and doing and let our grip on freedom grow firmer.

In the conditions of today old slogans seem a little out of place to me. To say that today we have to fight the British would be something like fighting phantoms. It would be like fighting an army lost in the jungle and running about purposelessly.

The Congress workers should work for extending the great organisation, the Congress, that has for sixty years fought for freedom. Let us not lose sight of the goal and get mixed up with trivialities.

11. Resolution on Congress Objectives[1]

The Congress, meeting after six and a half years of war and upheaval and frightfulness,[2] pays its homage to the memory of all those who have given their lives in the cause of India's freedom and all those who have suffered in the struggle for freedom and the emancipation of India's millions. During these years the World War raged in all its fury, and in India the armed might of an alien imperialist power tried to crush the spirit of freedom and the passionate desire of the Indian people to gain independence.

The Indian people resisted this ruthless onslaught and through travail and

1. This resolution was moved by Nehru at the subjects committee meeting at Meerut on 22 November 1946 and was passed unanimously. *Congress Bulletin*, 1 January 1947, pp. 14-15; also printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 23 November 1946.
2. The previous Congress session was held in March 1940 at Ramgarh in Bihar.

agony demonstrated their will to freedom. The complete failure and incompetence of an out-of-date political and administrative system resulted in famine which took its toll of millions of lives.

The end of the World War has not brought peace to the world and the appearance of the atom bomb as a weapon of war, with its frightful and horrible powers of destruction, has brought to a crisis the immoral and self-destructive elements of the present-day political, economic and spiritual structure of the world. Civilization is likely to destroy itself unless it gives up its imperialist and acquisitive tendencies and bases itself on the peaceful cooperation of free nations and on the maintenance of the dignity of man.

In India, as elsewhere, the period of transition from the old world, which has demonstrated its failure to the new, to which millions look with hope and for which they strive, is full of peril, and reactionary forces are everywhere trying to prevent the establishment of a new order of peace and freedom. This Congress has always stood for the full cooperation of free nations and for the removal of political and economic inequality between nations and peoples.

India has been and is today the crux of the problem of freedom of subject peoples. On the complete emancipation of the Indian people depends the freedom of vast numbers of others in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. World peace and progress depend upon the solution of the Indian problem.

This Congress, therefore, reiterates its firm determination to continue the struggle for India's complete freedom till she becomes an independent nation cooperating with others on an equal basis for the establishment of peace, freedom and progress everywhere. India, by virtue of her past, her present position and her potential power, cannot accept a secondary position in the comity of nations.

For more than sixty years the National Congress has led the people of India towards this ideal and through struggle and constructive effort it has built up the strength of the Indian people. It has based itself on high ideals and endeavoured to put before the nation moral standards of conduct both on the individual and on the political plane because it was convinced that greatness of achievement comes to a nation only by keeping high objectives before it and by pursuing methods which are worthy of a great people. In these days of bitter and tragic internal conflict and a lowering of these ideals, this Congress reiterates its faith in the high destiny of India and the ideals which have moved the Indian people. Any weakness, complacency or straying from the straight path to freedom may well imperil the independence for which the people of India have struggled and which is now within their grasp.

The Congress, therefore, calls upon the people to put an end to internecine conflict and to face internal and external dangers as a united people in the spirit in which they have fought in the past for India's independence. That struggle has not ended and may yet require many sacrifices.

12. Speech on the Resolution on Congress Objectives[1]

This resolution should have been the first to be discussed by the Subjects Committee for it turns our gaze towards the recent past and asks us to draw lessons from it. The last six and a half years have been years of war and revolution with many ups and downs in our own struggle. The story of what the country suffered during this period, how it faced the enemy, how it was knocked down and how it got up again, how on the borders of India the Azad Hind Fauj was organized and how it fought for Indian freedom cannot be told in a resolution. Only history can do full justice to them. But now that we meet, it is well to look back and draw lessons from it. Nations benefit from experience. During the last two decades there have been laid layer upon layer of experience on the Indian mind and heart. That is how nations benefit from their past experience and become strong.

I do not have much to say on the resolution but there is one aspect of it to which I would like to draw your attention. Today everyone says and believes that we are on the threshold of independence. It is significant that it is only now that we are faced with various dangers. They are not external dangers. External dangers we have fought before and overcome. But they are greater dangers because they are internal. They have succeeded in changing the course of our battle and converted it from a struggle against the external foe to a struggle against forces inside the nation. It would not do to find fault with others. Whoever's fault it may be, it is we who have to suffer and the fulfilment of the task for which we have laboured all our lives is held up.

The internal condition of the Congress distresses me greatly. We are getting involved in factional squabbles and forgetting our goal. We are, by such internecine conflict, weakening the Congress and rendering it hollow from within. How then shall we have the strength to be free? And even if we do secure our freedom, how shall we have the strength to keep that freedom?

The dream we had dreamed was not only of national independence, not only of the ending of British rule. We had dreamed of something more creative. We had dreamed of setting up a democratic State in which every section of the Indian people would have a share, a State which would rid the country of the terrible disease of poverty. We have progressed a little distance towards the realization of that dream whenever we could. But if we get involved in factional strife how will we go ahead towards our goal?

When I look at the organizational scene within the Congress I am greatly distressed. Everybody is singing his own tune. And when everybody plays his own tune, the result is not a symphony but just noise.

1. Meerut, 22 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 23 November 1946.

The resolution calls upon us to look back towards the past, draw courage and sustenance from it, and also warns us of the dangers ahead.

13. Retrospect[1]

During the last six and a half years since we last met, much has happened to us and to the world. That long story of war and revolution cannot be contained in a single resolution.[2] I do not know where to begin the story. Many a scene flashes across my mind.

At Ramgarh when amidst wind and rain and storm we passed a few resolutions the World War had just broken out. Later on it spread and big empires vanished. In 1942 we also took a long stride. The British reaction to that step we took was our arrest and a campaign of repression. Our people also retaliated against the police terror.

The year 1942 was a testing time. That was a time when various individuals and organizations were weighed in the national scale. We cannot forget the role of various individuals and organizations during that time of crisis. We cannot specially forget the role which certain officials played during that movement. If they think we have forgotten it, they are mistaken. I realize their position and am prepared to sympathise with them. But those who were responsible for the atrocities committed on the people must not escape punishment. We can show neither fear nor favour in punishing them. Twice I took up the question with the Viceroy. The Viceroy suggested to me not to oppress the officials. I am prepared to take a generous view of what most officials did. They were prisoners of their circumstances.

But I am not prepared to condone the action of those who were guilty of acts of brutality and savagery against our people. There has been too much dilatoriness in this matter. I want the Congress Ministries to listen to me when I say this. I want the Viceroy to listen to this. I am fed up with waiting. The result is that all those who thought that they would be punished for their brutal deeds have become reassured and are now obsequiously salaaming us.

It is not that I do not appreciate the difficulties of the services. Among them there are many able and fine men. It is my duty as a Member of the Interim Government to protect them if they are attacked. But it is also my duty not to protect the bad among them, because that would lower the standard of services.

1. Speech at the Congress session at Meerut, 23 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu*, 24 November 1946.
2. See *ante*, item 11.

During recent months I have had some experience of the working of Government officials, mostly high Government officials. Most of them were able, hardworking men. Life in Government service was not all comfort. In fact if Congressmen worked as hard as some of those officials do they would be able to make the Congress much stronger than what it is.

But though most of them were able and hard-working men, they could not adjust themselves to the changed conditions. The greater number of British officials seemed to think that anyone who followed the path of progress was their enemy. The Congress as a revolutionary party was looked upon with hostility. The British bureaucracy mainly depended on the support of the vested interests. The mass of the people were outside its pale of influence. Therefore those who represented the masses incurred the hostility of the officials.

It was said that the British officials were friends of the Muslim League. It was not that they had any particular sympathy with the League. But it was because the League itself was not a revolutionary organization. Its leadership consisted mostly of the middle class people and they had intellectual and mental affinity with senior Government officials like Governors.

The experience of the last few months has shown that they cannot get on well with these Governors and Viceroys. They have either to change or quit.

The British Government after taking a step forward are trying to retrace their steps. It may be the British Government in England are true to their promises, but it is too hard to work through their agents in India and be guided by their advice. They had some sympathy for the British Government but they were not going to get involved in the controversy as to who was responsible for this delay. They had to get a move on. That sort of a game could not go on.

Six months ago, we were told that the Constituent Assembly would be convened. Elections to the Constituent Assembly were held two or three months ago. But still there is no Constituent Assembly.

I am not very much enamoured of the Constituent Assembly but when I got into the Interim Government I did not go there in order that I might be able to do little good deeds every day. For me the test was whether my functioning in those high offices was taking us on the road to freedom. When there is delay in bringing into motion the machinery laid down by the Cabinet Mission I feel doubts whether the British Government are now prepared to pursue the path on which they had started.

But the British are not the only enemy. We have enemies in our camp. We must weed out corruption and defeat these enemies in the final struggle for India's liberation. Inside the Congress organization the prospect is dismal. Factional strife is rampant within the organization. There is a kind of mutual tussle that is a sign of life. There is another kind of mutual tussle which is the sign of degeneration and internal quarrels in the Congress mostly come in

that category. We need some of the old courage and the old inspiration to put an end to these dismal conflicts inside the organization. We should follow the high ideals of the Congress and not stoop to base methods in our domestic quarrels.

14. The Two-Pronged Fascism in India[1]

I received a note yesterday in the Congress session from a delegate holding me responsible for thousands of Hindu lives lost in Bihar as a result of the alleged air bombing. The reports of bombing in Bihar during the disturbances are categorically wrong. In this connection I would like to describe the circumstances under which about 24 men of a Madras Regiment came to a clash on half a dozen occasions with a crowd of 2,500 Hindus who were involved in a pitched battle with 1,200 Muslims in a place called Nagarnausa. The Regiment was entrusted with the task of evacuating 1,200 Muslims to a place of safety. According to Army sources, about forty people were killed but unofficial sources estimated the death roll between fifty and sixty. My enquiry reveals that in the communal clashes at Nagarnausa about 25 Muslims and between ten and fifteen Hindus were killed in three days' clashes. I was shocked at the exaggerated figures of casualties in Bihar circulated by interested parties.

You must know how the communal trouble in the country started and the deterioration that has occurred in the last ten years. The Muslim League adopted fascist tactics. Their strategy was based on the Hitlerian technique and had many things in common with Hitler's methods. Muslim League leaders like Hitler indulged in a hymn of hatred and violence. The League had no constructive or economic programme for the country or for the Muslim masses. The League had never clarified its position because its leaders had always shelved discussions of questions which might falsify their claims to represent all sections of the Muslim population.

A prominent member of the League Council told me that he once asked Mr. Jinnah to place the League's constructive programme before the Muslim masses, but Mr. Jinnah replied that any such programme would lead to differences and disruption in the Muslim League ranks. Hatred of Hindus was a uniting force. Mr. Jinnah said: "The programme of the League is to preach hatred against the Congress and Hindus."

1. Speech supporting the resolution on the communal situation, Meerut, 24 November 1946. From *Hindusthan Standard* and *The Hindu* of 25 November 1946.

I am not afraid of bloodshed. The present civil strife in the country has no doubt moved me, but it has to be faced with a brave heart. I hope the situation will improve. It is true that incidents in one part of the country have repercussions in other parts. Congress has faced many a danger in the past and will not shirk its responsibility in a crisis like this even though some of us may have to lose our lives.

The fascist policy of the League is giving birth to a rival fascism which I would term as "Hindu fascism". All types of fascism exploit the name of religion and my fear is that the growing Hindu fascism possesses all the dangerous potentialities of the Muslim League fascism. Both are the enemies of the unity and progress of India. Congress has liquidated British fascism and it is my conviction that it will similarly deal with the two-pronged Indian fascism which threatens to wipe out our proud culture and civilisation.

15. The Message of Peace and Harmony[1]

The Congressmen of Bengal should go out into the villages and preach the message of peace and communal harmony.

I do not think any useful purpose would have been served by my visiting Noakhali in view of the attitude of the Bengal Ministry.[2] Even if I had gone there, I would not have been able to do anything for the well-being of the East Bengal sufferers. As against this the Bihar Ministry gave me full help in my work.

The best manner in which the existing situation can be improved is by educating the Muslim peasantry against the poisonous communal propaganda of the League.

1. Address to the Bengal Congress delegates, Meerut, 24 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 26 November 1946.
2. Some Bengal delegates had asked Nehru why he did not go to Noakhali and other affected areas in East Bengal after his visit to Calcutta.

16. To S.D. Kitchlew[1]

New Delhi
20 December 1946

My dear Saifuddin,
I have received the most extraordinary reports from Mrs. Asaf Ali and others about the activities of the so-called Jammu Congress Committee in regard to the Kashmir State elections.[2] They are not only opposing the National Conference candidates, but have encouraged rowdyism and personal attacks. This is a very strange state of affairs. What the position of the Jammu Congress Committee is I do not know. They say that it is affiliated to the A.I.C.C. This is absurd as there is no such direct affiliation. They can only be connected with the Punjab P.C.C. or not at all. It is clear that the persons calling themselves Congressmen in Jammu are no Congressmen and are violating Congress directions. You should, therefore, immediately take action against them both as a Committee and as individuals and call upon them to show cause why disciplinary action might not be taken against them. The Congress policy in the States is quite clear and any Congress Committees that exist there must not come into conflict with or oppose the States People's organization there, more specially in regard to election activities.[3] In the present instance actual misbehaviour is alleged. I understand that the President and Secretary of the Jammu Congress are members of the A.I.C.C. also. I hope you will take early action in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Aruna Asaf Ali had complained that she had been dissuaded from addressing election meetings in Jammu and other places by the "members of an organisation styling itself as the Jammu National Congress". It had set up candidates against the National Conference and hired people to disturb meetings. On one occasion they had raised slogans derogatory to the Congress.
3. On 13 August 1946, the Congress Working Committee resolved that "any existing Congress Committee in a State must avoid any conflict in the political or parliamentary field with established Praja Mandals and work in cooperation with them, the political policy being laid down by the Praja Mandals."

17. Statement of Working Committee on Declaration of 6 December

Nehru's confidential draft for Working Committee, 22 December 1946[1]

The Working Committee have given careful consideration to the statement issued by the British Government on December 6, 1946[3] as well as other statements made recently on their behalf in Parliament.[4] These statements, though made by way of interpretation and elucidation, are clearly additions to, and variations of, the British Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16, 1946 on which the whole scheme of the Constituent Assemby was based.

2. The statement of May 16, 1946 laid down in paragraph 15 (3) and (5) as basic principles of the constitution

Statement issued by the Working Committee at Delhi on 22 December 1946[2]

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The statement of May 16th, 1946, laid down in paragraph 15 as basic principles of the constitution that

1. J.N. Collection.
2. *The Statesman,* 23 December 1946; also printed in the *Congress Bulletin,* 1 January 1947, pp. 28-32.
3. The declaration of 6 December 1946 confirmed the Cabinet Mission's interpretation of the grouping clauses which was in essence (a) the compulsion of provinces to meet in groups, (b) the validity of the decision to opt out of the groups after the first election under the new group constitution, (c) all disagreements within the section to be resolved by a simple majority vote and (d) the constitution not to be imposed upon any unwilling part of the country.
4. On 12 December 1946, Winston Churchill said in the House of Commons that by inviting the Congress to form an Interim Government the Government had facilitated a series of massacres unparalleled in the history of India. On 16 December 1946, Pethick-Lawrence declared in the House of Lords, "H.M.G. do not consider that this issue is one which it is desirable should be referred to the Federal Court. The Statement of December 6 makes it clear and also the interpretation which H.M.G. themselves hold. The view of the British Government is that the interpretation should be accepted by all parties."

that "all subjects other than Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces" and that "Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures". The provinces were thus intended to be autonomous subject to the Union controlling certain specified subjects. Paragraph 19 laid down, *inter alia,* the procedure for sections to meet, for decisions to be taken as to whether groups should be formed or not, and for any province to elect to come out of the group in which it might have been placed.

3. In their resolution of May 24, 1946, the Working Committee pointed out what appeared to be a divergence between the basic principles and the procedure suggested, in that a measure of compulsion was introduced which infringed the basic principle of provincial autonomy. The Cabinet Mission thereupon issued a statement on May 25, 1946 in which it was stated that "the interpretation put by the Congress resolution on paragraph 15 of the statement, to the effect that the Provinces can in the first instance make the choice whether or not to belong to the Section in which they are placed does not accord with the Delegation's intentions. The reasons for the grouping of the Provinces are well known and this is an essential feature of the scheme and can only be modified by agreement between the two parties."

"there should be a Union of India embracing both British India and the States", that "all subjects other than Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the provinces", and that the "provinces should be free to form groups". The provinces were thus intended to be autonomous, subject to the Union controlling certain specified subjects. Paragraph 19 laid down, *inter alia,* the procedure for sections to meet, for decisions to be taken as to whether groups should be formed or not, and for any province to elect to come out of the group in which it might have been placed.

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	principle of provincial autonomy and whether or not a province or part should be coerced against its will.
4. The Congress made it clear later that their objection was not to provinces entering sections but to compulsory grouping and the possibility of a dominating province framing a constitution for another province entirely against the wishes of the latter. This might result in the framing of rules, franchise, constituencies &c. for elections and otherwise which might seriously prejudice or even nullify the provision for a province subsequently to opt out of a group. We pointed out that this could never be the intention of the Cabinet Mission as it would be repugnant to the basic principles and policy of the scheme they had propounded. Our own approach to the problem of constitution making has all along been that coercion should not be exercised and that the constitution of free India should be drawn up by the cooperation and goodwill of all parties concerned.	The Congress made it clear later that their objection was not to provinces entering sections but to compulsory grouping and the possibility of a dominating province framing a constitution for another province entirely against the wishes of the latter. This might result in the framing of rules; and the regulation of franchise, electorates, constituencies for elections and the composition of the legislature which might seriously prejudice or even nullify the provision for a province subsequently to opt out of a group. It was pointed out that this could never be the intention of the Cabinet Mission as it would be repugnant to the basic principles and policy of the scheme they had propounded. The Congress approach to the problem of constitution-making has all along been that coercion should not be exercised against any province or part of the country, and that the constitution of free India should be drawn up with the cooperation and goodwill of all parties and provinces concerned.
5. In a letter dated 15 June 1946 from Lord Wavell to Maulana Azad, the President of the Congress, it was stated that "the Delegation and I are aware of your objections to the principle of grouping. I would however point out that the statement of 16th May does not make grouping compulsory. It leaves the decision to the	In a letter, dated June 15th, 1946, from Lord Wavell to Maulana Azad, the President of the Congress, it was stated that "the delegation and I are aware of your objections to the principle of grouping. I would, however, point out that the statement of May 16th does not make grouping compulsory. It leaves the decision to the

elected representatives of the Provinces concerned sitting together in sections. The only provision which is made is that the representatives of certain Provinces should meet in sections so that they can decide whether or not they wish to form groups." Thus the principle which was emphasized again was that grouping was not compulsory and in regard to sections a certain procedure was indicated. This procedure was not clear and could be interpreted in more than one way and in any event a point of procedure could not override a basic principle. We pointed out that the right interpretation should be one which did no violence to that principle. Further, in order to smooth the way to the cooperation of all concerned in the working of the proposed scheme, we suggested that if our interpretation was not accepted we would be agreeable to a reference on this point to the Federal Court.

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6. It is well known that the proposal in regard to grouping affected injuriously two provinces especially, namely Assam and the North West Frontier Province, as well as the Sikhs in the Punjab. Their representatives expressed their strong disapproval of this proposal. In a letter from Master Tara Singh to the Secretary of State dated 25th May 1946 he gave expression to the anxiety and apprehensions of the Sikhs, and asked for clarification in

It is well known that the proposal in regard to grouping affected injuriously two provinces especially, namely, Assam and the North-West Frontier Province, as well as the Sikhs in the Punjab. Their representatives expressed their strong disapproval of this proposal. In a letter to the Secretary of State, dated May 25th, 1946, Master Tara Singh gave expression to the anxiety and apprehensions of the Sikhs and asked for clarification in regard to certain

regard to certain matters. The Secretary of State sent an answer to this letter on 1st June 1946 in the course of which he said: "I have considered carefully the detailed points you raise at the end of your letter. I fear the mission cannot issue any additions to, or interpretations of, the statement".

7. In spite of this explicit statement, the British Government have, on December 6th, issued a statement which is both an addition to, and an interpretation of, the statement of May 16, 1946. They have done so after more than six and a half months, during which period many developments have taken place as a consequence of the original statement. Throughout this period the position of the Congress was made repeatedly clear to the British Government or their representatives, and it was with full knowledge of this position that the British Government acted. That position was in conformity with the basic principles laid down in the statement of May 16, 1946, which statement the Congress had accepted in its entirety. Further the Congress had expressed its willingness to refer, if necessity arose, the point of interpretation to the Federal Court, whose decision should be accepted by the parties concerned.

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Throughout this period the position of the Congress was made repeatedly clear to the British Government or their representatives and it was with full knowledge of this position that the British Government took subsequent steps in furtherance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals. That position was in conformity with the basic principles laid down in the statement of May 16th, 1946, which statement the Congress had accepted in its entirety.

Further, the Congress had expressed its willingness to refer, if necessity arose, the point of interpretation to the Federal Court, whose decision should be accepted by the parties concerned. In the course of his letter, dated June 28th, 1946, addressed to Mr. Jinnah, the Viceroy stated that "Congress had accepted the statement of May 16th". In the

course of a broadcast on August 24th, 1946, the Viceroy, in appealing to the Muslim League to cooperate, pointed out that the Congress are ready to agree that any dispute of interpretation may be referred to the Federal Court.

The Muslim League reversed its former decision and rejected the British Cabinet Mission's scheme by a formal resolution and even decided to resort to direct action. Their spokesmen have since repeatedly challenged the very basis of that scheme, that is, the constitution of a Union of India, and have reverted to their demand for a partition of India. Even after the British Government's statement of December 6th, 1946, the leaders of the Muslim League have reiterated this demand for partition and the establishment of two separate independent Governments in India.

8. When the invitation of the British Government was received by the Congress at the end of November last to send its representatives to London, the Congress position was clearly indicated again. It was on certain assurances of the Prime Minister of Great Britain that a representative of the Congress proceeded to London.

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9. In spite of this assurance and of previous assurances to the effect that no additions to, or interpretations of, the statement of May 16, 1946 were going to be made, the British Government have now issued a statement which clearly, in many respects, goes beyond the original statement, on the

In spite of this assurance and the previous assurances to the effect that no additions to, or interpretations of, the statement of May 16th, 1946, were going to be made, the British Government have now issued a statement which clearly, in several respects, goes beyond the original

basis of which progress has been made till now.

10. The Working Committee deeply regret that the British Government should have acted in a manner which has not been in keeping with their own assurances, and which has created suspicion in the minds of large numbers of people in India. For some time past the attitude of the British Government and their representatives in India has been such as to add to the difficulties and complexities of the situation in the country. Their present intervention, on the eve of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, and the manner and tone in which this has taken place, has lessened the chances of a peaceful and cooperative transfer of power in India, for which the Congress has been working. This has created a new situation which is full of peril for the future, and because of this, the Working Committee have given anxious and prolonged thought to it. Many of the speeches made recently in the British Parliament, which abound in wrong statements and inferences, are in tone and content representative of the authoritarian and aggressive traditions of British imperialism. The India of today cannot tolerate this approach from any outsider and resents alien interference and intervention.

The Congress, however, cannot be diverted from its path by provocative utterances and external intervention. It seeks to frame, through the Constituent Assembly, a consti-

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The Congress seeks to frame, through the Constituent Assembly, a constitution of a free and independent India with the willing cooperation of all elements of the Indian

tution of a free and independent India with the willing cooperation of all elements of the Indian people. The Working Committee regret that Muslim League members of the Constituent Assembly have refrained from attending its opening session.

The Committee, however, appreciate and express their gratification at the presence in the Constituent Assembly of representatives of all other interests and sections of the people of India, and note with pleasure the spirit of cooperation in a common task and a high endeavour which has been in evidence during the sessions of the Assembly. The Committee will continue their efforts to make the Constituent Assembly fully representative of all the people of India and trust that members of the Muslim League will give their cooperation in this great task. In order to achieve this, the Committee have advised Congress representatives in the Assembly to postpone consideration of controversial issues to a subsequent meeting.

In their statement of December 6, 1946, the British Government in giving their interpretation of a doubtful point of procedure have referred to it as a "fundamental point", and suggested that the Constituent Assembly may refer it to the Federal Court. Subsequent statements made on behalf of the British Government have made it clear that they are not prepared to accept the decision of this Court should it go against their own interpretation. On behalf of the Muslim League also it has been stated that they will not be bound by

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In their statement of December 6th, 1946, the British Government, in giving their interpretation of a doubtful point of procedure, have referred to it as a "fundamental point", and suggested that the Constituent Assembly may refer it to the Federal Court at a very early date. Subsequent statements made on behalf of the British Government have made it clear that they are not prepared to accept the decision of this Court should it go against their own interpretation. On behalf of the Muslim League also it has been stated that

the decision of the Federal Court. While the Congress has always been willing to abide by such a reference and decision in regard to this matter, any reference now, when none of the other parties are prepared to join in it or to accept it, becomes totally uncalled for and unbecoming, and unsuited to the dignity of either the Congress or the Federal Court. By their repeated statements, British statesmen have ruled this out.

they will not be bound by the decision of the Federal Court and a demand for the partition of India, which is a negation of the Cabinet Mission's scheme, continues to be put forward.

While the Congress has always been willing to agree to a reference to the Federal Court, any reference now, when none of the other parties are prepared to join in it or to accept it, and one of them does not even accept the basis of the scheme, becomes totally uncalled for and unbecoming, and unsuited to the dignity of either the Congress or the Federal Court. By their repeated statements, British statesmen have ruled this out.

The Working Committee are still of opinion that the interpretation put by the British Government in regard to the method of voting in the sections is not in conformity with provincial autonomy, which is one of the fundamental bases of the proposed constitution. Nevertheless, the Committee are anxious to avoid anything that may come in the way of the successful working of the Constituent Assembly. To insure this they will endeavour to seek and obtain the largest measure of cooperation, provided that no fundamental principle is violated. They are therefore advising Congress representatives in the Constituent Assembly to accept the procedure suggested. But they cannot be parties to any coercion of a province against its will or to the interests of the Sikhs being made to suffer by a majority in

The Working Committee are still of the opinion that the interpretation put by the British Government in regard to the method of voting in the sections is not in conformity with provincial autonomy, which is one of the fundamental bases of the scheme proposed in the statement of May 16th. The Committee are anxious to avoid anything that may come in the way of the successful working of the Constituent Assembly, and are prepared to do everything in their power to seek and obtain the largest measure of cooperation, provided that no fundamental principle is violated.

In view of the importance and urgency of the issues facing the country and the far-reaching consequences which must follow any decisions, the Working Committee are convening an emergent meeting

a section. In particular, any attempt to impose the basic structure of a provincial constitution, such as franchise, constituencies etc., against the wishes of the majority of representatives from the province concerned will have to be resisted. Such an imposition would render negatory the option to opt out which has been given to a province.

The Working Committee earnestly hope that their efforts to gain the co-operation in the Constituent Assembly of those who have so far denied it will meet with response and success, so that the great work that has now begun may proceed rapidly and end in the framing of a constitution which does justice and gives freedom and opportunity to every man and woman in India. In any event the Constituent Assembly must go on till it has accomplished its task and a free, democratic, and sovereign republic emerges from its labours.

of the A.I.C.C. in Delhi early in January to consider the latest developments and to give such directions as it may deem fit.

18. The Positive Response of the Congress[1]

Friends and Comrades, I am now going to bring before you a resolution[2] recommending acceptance of the British Government's statement of December 6. It is a resolution drafted before Mahatma Gandhi at Comilla and passed by the Working Committee. I know there is controversy over the matter.[3] Still I would request you to consider the resolution in the light of the present circumstances and accept it. This is the resolution I move for your consideration and acceptance....[4]

Friends, it is a simple, straightforward resolution. There is no sign of weakness in it; if there was the least suspicion of weakness, I would not have brought it before you or commended it to your acceptance.

The main question before us is how to keep the Constituent Assembly alive and extract from it the greatest possible good for the country. By accepting the statement of December 6, we would leave the door open for the League to enter and put forward their point of view. If we do not accept that statement it will give an opportunity to the British Government to change or withdraw their earlier statement of May 16, with the result that the Constituent Assembly may be changed radically.

Obstacles have been put in the path of the Constituent Assembly in the past. We have overcome them and we should do everything in our power hereafter to prevent attempts to sabotage this great weapon which we can use to our advantage.

In my speech at Meerut I had referred to the crisis towards which I felt inside the Interim Government the Congress Ministers were fast moving.[5] The attitude of the British Government was adversely affecting the work of

1. Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, New Delhi, 5 January 1947. From *The Hindustan Times*, 6 January 1947; also printed in *New India Speaks* (Calcutta, 1947), pp. 118-123.
2. The resolution, drafted under Mahatma Gandhi's guidance, laid down that a reference to the Federal Court on the question of interpretation in dispute could only be made on an agreed basis, "the parties concerned agreeing to abide by the decision given". It added that "the constitution for a free and independent India should be framed by the people of India on the basis of as wide an agreement as possible" and that there "must be no interference whatsoever by any external authority, and no compulsion of any province or part of a province by another province".
3. In all 21 speakers took part in the debate concerning the 6 December statement. As many as 16 speakers opposed the resolution. These primarily included the Congress members from Assam and Congress Socialist Party leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan and R.M. Lohia.
4. Not reproduced.
5. See *ante*, item 9.

the Interim Government.[6] Those statements and the fears I had expressed then are now coming true. At the time of my earlier speech the British Government could not have claimed success in impeding our work but now the British Government are in a position to make that claim and substantiate it. The British Government's actions have created complications. A grave situation has been created and the resolution before the House which has been prepared with great care and deliberation is a simple, straightforward one meant to meet that situation.

The House is to decide whether to accept the statement of December 6 or not. This question has proved to be a headache. We are not in the habit of accepting things thrust upon us against our will. We were sorely tempted to accept the challenge contained in this statement and answer it with all the force at our command. But we realised the danger of allowing our emotions to overpower us.

Many forces have lined up against us. We should advance cautiously to meet and overcome those forces and it is this consideration that has prompted the Working Committee to bring the resolution before the House.

The resolution accepts the statement. Some may feel that this is a confession of weakness. I deny that our fight has taken on a new form with the meeting of the Constituent Assembly and our aim should be to see that the Assembly is not postponed or shelved. It has not yet begun to function in fullness but I hope that when it meets after a fortnight it will begin to function as it should.

The significant point about the Assembly is not whether it is sovereign or not, but that it cannot be dissolved by the British Government except by the use of force. When the British Government choose to use force in that way, then it will be time for us to decide how to face it. The primary point to bear in mind is that the Constituent Assembly has begun to function since December 9 and though it is not the Assembly of our ideals, yet it can be utilised as a weapon to achieve our independence. Therefore, it becomes absolutely essential and important to prevent attempts to postpone or shelve it. It has life in it and is capable of taking us far on the road to independence.

Our opponents have failed in their effort to shelve it, and so have adopted the alternative of putting obstacles in its way and have issued the statement of December 6. Since 1919 we have been depending entirely on our strength and have looked to the people of India and not to the British Government to achieve our objective.

We have no desire to add to the number of enemies ranged against us at this critical stage of our fight. Our enemies rely entirely on the British Government and the British Government rely on them to do mischief in India. But even the combination of the two has not the strength to fight us

6. See *ante*, item 13.

face to face. And so they resort to subterfuges and create obstacles in our way.

The Muslim League desired that the Constituent Assembly should not continue and that the country should revert to the order of things that prevailed eight or nine months ago.[7] If that desire materialises we shall meet that situation as we think best. But all our energies should now be bent on going ahead with the Constituent Assembly with strength and firmness. It is possible that we may have to fight on a different front and we should be prepared for that too. By passing this resolution we will show to the world that we do not intend to work behind closed doors. And in order to demonstrate our desire to keep the doors open, we do many unpleasant things and postpone many decisions which we would like to take without delay. We do not want to give an opportunity to anyone to say that we have broken the British plan.

It is true that Assam has a mandate to oppose sections and groups and Assam can fight if it wants. But I would like to remind you that battles are won not by the personal courage of one or two but by the cooperation of many thousands and by the mobilisation and right use of resources. At the present time our object should be to outmanoeuvre our opponents. The time may come when Assam will have to fight; that fight will not be single-handed but will be waged with the whole of India behind them.

In conclusion, again I refer to my statement at Meerut that I did not know how long I and my colleagues would continue in the Interim Government. I still do not know how long we shall remain there. People have been talking of the final fight for independence. I feel, however, that that fight is even now in progress. Possibly that fight will have to be intensified in the near future but the present situation is such as to call for restraint of language and calm deliberation before action. *Jai Hind.*

7. On 13 December 1946, Jinnah indicated at London that the Muslim League's condition for entering the Constituent Assembly was the unequivocal acceptance by the Congress of the British Government's interpretation of the grouping clauses.

19. On the Grouping Plan[1]

I agree with most of what Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan has said except with regard to the conclusions drawn by him.[2] The resolution has been drawn up after serious thought, but I would not dogmatize about the results that would flow from the acceptance of this resolution. It might cause harm; there is always this possibility.

Congress is strong enough to wipe the slate clean and start afresh. But I am at the same time grieved to see signs of internal organizational weakness. The strength of the Congress has so long rested on the fact that though Congressmen debated and deliberated and sometimes differed over issues, once a decision was reached, all accepted it loyally and followed it unwaveringly. Things are different now. I agree that one way of curing internal weakness and reestablishing unity is to launch a struggle, but I am not in favour of starting a major struggle merely in order to maintain structural or organizational unity.

Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan has disputed the idea that the British are quitting.[3] But my belief that they are quitting is based not on the desire of the British but on the compulsion of events which is forcing and hastening their departure. One of the main pillars on which the British Government rests in India is the Civil Service and that Civil Service is disappearing before our eyes. But the problem now is not merely to get rid of the foreign power but to prepare a concrete picture of what should take its place. This is the objective which the resolution before the House is intended to achieve.

I advise Assam to make a positive and constructive approach, and assure that the resolution will give it strength. I am quite alive to the dangers that confront Assam, but I would commend the resolution to its acceptance, because it is in the interests of the province to do so.[4]

1. Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, New Delhi, 6 January 1947. From *The Hindustan Times*, 7 January 1947.
2. On 6 January 1947, opposing the resolution Jayaprakash Narayan had said that it represented one more step forward on the slippery path of compromise, the end of which would be ultimate acceptance of even Pakistan. He charged Nehru with misleading the people by holding out false hopes.
3. Jayaprakash Narayan had said, "We are told that the British are quitting India. I saw no signs of it in my recent tour in the Punjab and in Kashmir. I saw no signs of it in the way the League has been brought into the Interim Government."
4. There was considerable apprehension among the Assamese that if they joined section C along with Bengal as envisaged in the Cabinet Mission Plan there would be a mass exodus of Bengali Muslims to Assam.

Dr. Lohia has dealt at length with the Naga Hills.[5] It is true that we can help the people of those hills, but I refuse to accept the proposition that the battle of Indian independence should be fought on the Naga Hills. I appeal for a more positive and fuller approach to the problem.

Regarding Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan's criticism of the A.I.C.C. on the ground that it always approves the Working Committee's decisions, I may say this is not a matter for surprise. The Working Committee after all represents the mind of the A.I.C.C. and so long as it enjoys the confidence of the A.I.C.C. its decisions or proposals must naturally be acceptable to the A.I.C.C. Personally I will like nothing better than that the Working Committee be changed every time a fresh lead is required to meet a new situation.

I declare that the Congress is not going to commit itself at the present moment to any reference to the Federal Court or to any authority.[6]

I am glad of this opportunity to refer to this paragraph. It is a paragraph which is likely to mislead people. It says as a fact that the Congress have agreed already to it. Exactly when the Congress agreed to this or in what form is not clear. What has happened in the past few months is that on many occasions when any question or dispute arose we have often said generally—and we said so at Simla—that we are prepared to refer any specific matter of dispute to an impartial arbitrator whether it is the international Hague Court or any court of justice. Once or twice we also said that if there is difficulty about interpretation, we are prepared to refer it to some authority like the Federal Court. These were general statements we made, and normally speaking we agree to abide by them. But the way in which it has been put in this statement, as if a formal statement was made to us and we agreed, is completely wrong.

Apart from this, in view of recent developments and the statement of December 6, which produces a new situation, I am not prepared to admit for an instant that we have agreed to any future procedure about references. Whatever the future brings we shall have to consider it. I should like to make it perfectly clear that we are giving no assurance about any references in regard to any other matters to the Federal Court. We find that everything we say is being twisted and distorted and brought against us in the future. We are not going to commit ourselves at the present moment to any reference

5. At the A.I.C.C. meeting of 5 January 1947, Lohia reiterated that in the Naga Hills the British Government and the American missionaries had started a campaign for separation from the rest of Assam, and that the Congress should counteract this propaganda. The battle of Assam was not so much to preserve Assam's provincial autonomy but to preserve Indian unity.

6. This was said in reply to a question raised by R.K. Sidhwa (Sind) with regard to the paragraph in the British statement of December 6, saying that the Congress had agreed to refer matters of interpretation to the Federal Court.

to the Federal Court or to any other authority. We shall decide—or the Constituent Assembly shall decide—as we think best in the circumstances.

I accept Mr. Abdus Samad Khan's amendment for the inclusion of Baluchistan in N.W.F.P. and Sikhs in the Punjab mentioned in paragraph 3 of the resolution expressing appreciation of the difficulties placed in the way of provinces by the British Cabinet Scheme of May 16. I oppose other amendments.[7]

7. The resolution moved by Nehru was put to vote and passed by a big majority.

20. The Independence Day Pledge[1]

The next Independence Day is taking place at a moment critical in India's history when the country is on the verge of the Independence we have struggled for and yet many obstructions remain and a sense of conflict and struggle pervades the country. The occasion requires a solemn rededication to the cause of freedom with a full realisation of the grave issues that confront the country. The Working Committee are of the opinion that on this occasion the day should be observed with all solemnity and in furtherance of national and constructive activities and the pledge be taken individually or in groups, without any speeches being delivered. Processions and public meetings should not be held for this purpose. The Committee advises Congressmen and Congress committees accordingly.

The following pledge should be taken:—

> We believe that it is an inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally, and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain *Purna* Swaraj or Complete Independence.

1. Resolution moved by Nehru at the meeting of the Congress Working Committee at New Delhi and passed on 7 January 1947. *The Hindustan Times*, 8 January 1947.

We recognise that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. India has gained strength and self-reliance and marched a long way to Swaraj following peaceful and legitimate methods, and it is by adhering to these methods that our country will attain Independence. We pledge ourselves anew to the Independence of India and solemnly resolve to carry out nonviolently the struggle for freedom till *Purna* Swaraj is attained.

We believe that nonviolent action in general, and preparation for nonviolent direct action in particular, require successful working of the constructive programme kept before the country by Gandhiji and accepted by the Congress, and in particular of khadi, communal harmony and removal of untouchability. We shall seek every opportunity of spreading goodwill among fellowmen without distinction of caste or creed. We shall endeavour to raise from ignorance and poverty those who have been neglected and to advance in every way the interests of those who are considered to be backward and suppressed. We know that though we are out to destroy the imperialistic system, we have no quarrel with Englishmen, whether officials or non-officials. We know that distinction between the caste Hindus and Harijans must be abolished, and Hindus have to forget these distinctions in their daily conduct. Such distinctions are a bar to nonviolent conduct. Though our religious faiths may be different, in our mutual relations we will act as children of mother India, bound by common nationality and common political and economic interest.

Charkha and khadi are an integral part of our constructive programme for the resuscitation of the seven hundred thousand villages of India and for the removal of the grinding poverty of the masses. We shall, therefore, use for our personal requirements nothing but khadi, and as far as possible, products of village handicrafts only and endeavour to make others do likewise. We shall also try to work to the best of our ability some item or items of the constructive programme.

We pay our grateful homage to thousands of our comrades who faced grave hardships, suffered humiliation and sacrificed their life and property in the struggle for freedom. Their sacrifice will always remind us of the duty never to rest until we have attained our goal.

This day we pledge ourselves again to a disciplined observance of Congress principles and policies and to keep in readiness to respond to the call of the Congress to carry on, if and whenever called upon, the struggle for the Independence of India.

2

COMMUNALISM

1. To Bhimsen Sachar[1]

New Delhi
5 September 1946

My dear Bhimsenji,
I am very much occupied with my work here. But inevitably Punjab affairs come up before me. As you know, the functioning of the Punjab Ministry has given us more headaches than most other things. There are constant complaints and apparently the Punjab Government is still chiefly run by the Governor and the I.C.S. personnel. I realise your difficulties, but I still think that the Government's record is very poor. For my part I do not see why we should associate ourselves in this way with reactionary activities.

Normally I do not write to you about the complaints I receive. But today a number of Ahrars came to me and I felt that I should write to you. I have not seen eye to eye with the Ahrars in many matters in the past, but there is no doubt that many of them have been fine workers for the national cause and have suffered greatly in consequence. I have always felt very friendly towards them. I feel that wherever possible and legitimate they should be encouraged. I am told that in the Miawali District the Ahrars are prevented from holding meetings, although all other groups and individuals can do so. This seems very odd in principle and more so because the Ahrars are made to suffer.

In Jullundur, I am told, there is considerable agitation over the building of a cinema between two mosques. I do not know all the facts of the case, but *prima facie* it is obvious that any such construction is bound to give rise to bitterness and ill-feeling. In the interest of the Ministry this kind of thing should be stopped immediately. There are quite enough people in the Punjab who will exploit everything they can find to the disadvantage of the Ministry.

I read in the papers that in Ludhiana on Id day the Imam of a masjid, Mufti Mohamad Naim, was arrested an hour before Id prayers in order to prevent him from leading these prayers. Apparently he had done so for the last 18 years. I suppose the reason given for his arrest was that a certain section of the Muslims did not want him there. This was a strange proceeding and resulted in, and was possibly meant to result in, the favouring of a special party. During the prayers the Mufti's son, Zia-ul-Hassan, led the prayers and he was arrested while doing so. Eight others followed him one after another and were also arrested. I do not know of any other instance when people were arrested in a mosque during prayers, and on Id day of all days. This very remarkable occurrence cannot be allowed to be ignored, even though the arrested persons were released afterwards. Obviously some kind of inquiry should be held into the behaviour of the magistrate and the police officer who were responsible for these arrests.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

In Allahabad a similar question arose over the leadership of the Id prayers. The authorities did not interfere at all and their old Imam insisted on carrying out his function. The Minister of the U.P. Government stated that they did not propose to remove any Muttawali or Imam who had been functioning for a number of years. If anybody contested his claim he could go to the law court.

There is one other matter about which I should like to write to you though I do not know what the exact position is now. There were some election petitions against Sardar Baldev Singh and others. It is quite absurd to carry on these petitions when Baldev Singh is a colleague of ours.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. To Gopinath Bardoloi[1]

19 September 1946

My dear Bardoloi,
I enclose a letter addressed to you from Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani. If you cannot read Urdu you had better get it read out to you. I have not myself read this letter, but I have had a talk with the Maulana. He is very worried at occurrences in Sylhet recently when he was there and he is anxious that something should be done about them.[2] I understand that the Muslim hotel there was sacked and looted and that the behaviour of the magistrate was far from satisfactory.

About the line system[3] I read a report prepared by a committee of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema. The report was a good one generally speaking, though Fakhruddin pointed out some minor errors. I understand that some effect has been given to the recommendations in that report.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Gopinath Bardoloi Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Trouble started when a liquor shop in Sylhet town was attacked; and then supporters of the Muslim League attacked some Hindus and nationalist Muslims.
3. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 283.

3. Victims of Riots in Calcutta[1]

The terrible tragedy of Calcutta[2] has resulted not only in thousands of deaths, but also in ruining vast numbers of households. It is up to us to help those people who have suffered. I am glad the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee has organised a Relief and Rehabilitation Committee[3] for this purpose. This Committee will give every possible help to the victims of the disturbances, more especially to those who have been rendered homeless and are stranded. This work necessitates huge resources and large numbers of willing workers. It will be done, of course, without any regard to the creed, religion, or party of the victims. Everyone who deserves help should be helped. By selfless service of this kind we shall not only be doing a public duty but also trying to heal the terrible sores that have been caused by recent occurrences. I hope that the Relief and Rehabilitation Committee will get every kind of help from the public, both financial and in the shape of willing workers. The immediate need is for relief and rehabilitation. This is not a matter affecting Calcutta or Bengal only. The whole of India owes a duty in this respect and I hope people in different provinces will realise this and come to the help of the sufferers of Calcutta.

1. Appeal issued at New Delhi on 27 September 1946. A.I.C.C. File No. G-45/1946, p. 275, N.M.M.L.
2. The Great Calcutta Killing took place on 16 August 1946 as a result of the observance by the Muslim League of the Direct Action Day. See also *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 292-293.
3. The Relief and Rehabilitation Committee was formed in September 1946. Its treasurer was Labanya Prova Dutta.

4. To Rafi Ahmad Kidwai[1]

Allahabad
September 28, 1946

My dear Rafi,
I have come to Allahabad for a day and a half and am returning tomorrow afternoon to Delhi. Some people have come to me here complaining of a punitive tax,[2] or rather complaining that nationalist Muslims should be made

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The U.P. Government proposed to levy a punitive tax on the Muslim population of Aligarh as a sequel to the happenings in that city in March 1946.

to suffer by payment of this tax. This is obviously very unfair and these poor people have the worst of it whatever happens. Many of them have done extraordinarily good work during these disorders and have even suffered beatings at the time and now to be made to pay for other people's misdeeds is hard luck indeed. Yet I realise how difficult it must be for you to lay down any rule distinguishing them from Muslim Leaguers and the like. Perhaps your inventive brain might find a way out. Will you try to do so? Otherwise they are driven against their will into the Muslim League fold. Is it possible to say that those people who are pledged to or who pledged themselves to peaceful and nonviolent activities may be released from the obligation of paying the punitive tax? Anyhow think about this and do what you can.

Yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
14 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have been receiving daily telegrams from East Bengal and sometimes from Calcutta giving distressing accounts of the conditions there. There have been details of stabbings and murder and looting round about Daccà and elsewhere. People have also come to me who have given exceedingly painful reports of these happenings. It is possible that in their excitement they have exaggerated. But what struck me most was that some of these persons talk to me as the victims of Hitler used to talk in the early thirties. I have not thought it worthwhile to trouble you with these reports as my previous references to Bengal[2] have not borne fruit.

I am now writing to you because I have just received a trunk call from Calcutta from Haran Chandra Ghosh,[3] M.L.A. He states that these stabbings and murder and looting have spread to Noakhali district in Bengal, and he mentions a number of towns and villages which are seriously affected. He further stated that families of middle-class people have been murdered including the President of the local Bar Association.

I do not know what I can do in this matter. But I hope you will realise how exceedingly distressing this is for all of us.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 724-725.
2. See Nehru's letters to Wavell dated 22 August, 8 September and 9 October 1946; printed in *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 306-308 and in this volume, section 3(II), items 7 and 21 respectively.
3. Haran Chandra Ghosh Choudhury; member for Noakhali of Bengal Legislative Assembly; President, Noakhali District Congress Committee.

Surely it serves little purpose to say that all this is due to communal friction and to divide up the blame between various parties or groups. Conditions are difficult in various parts of India, but it has become the special province of Bengal to indulge in this horror and frightfulness. There was the famine three years ago. There was the Calcutta killing two months ago, and there is now this mass slaughter, etc., in Noakhali and the surrounding districts which, if reports are correct, is far worse than the Calcutta killing.[4] Law and special and other responsibilities have no meaning when they become completely incapable of controlling such a situation. It is a terrible responsibility for all those in charge. But it is also a terrible responsibility for us and we too have to answer before the people of India. What is the good of our forming the Interim Government of India if all that we can do is to watch helplessly and do nothing else when thousands of people are being butchered and subjected to infinitely worse treatment?

I am greatly perturbed. I feel that we must face this issue somehow or else we retire from the public scene.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. As a sequel to the Calcutta killing, lawlessness and mob violence broke out in several villages of Noakhali district in East Bengal. It led to mass murder of Hindus, looting, arson, forcible mass conversion and desecration of places of worship. The violence also spread to the neighbouring district of Tipperah.

7. The Powers of the Centre[1]

This matter relates specially to the Home Department and my colleague here may speak on it. But may I say one word in regard to this particular motion? I am zealous of the powers of this House and I should not like anyone to limit these powers.[2] I am not such a big constitutional lawyer as many present here but I would resist any decision. Naturally the Home Member will say what he has to say about the attitude of the Government in regard to these motions. Naturally any motion which is in the nature of a condemnatory motion against the Government has to be resisted by us. As a legal argument I do submit that the matter is a very intricate one and I hope no decision will be given that will in future limit the powers of this House.

1. Speech in the Legislative Assembly on 28 October 1946 on the adjournment motion demanding that the Central Government advise the Governor-General to take steps to check communal disturbances and ensure peace and tranquillity in the provinces like Bengal, Bombay, U.P. and Bihar. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VII, 1946, 28 October 1946—11 November 1946, p. 101.
2. Cowasjee Jehangir had said that the Centre should not interfere in such domestic matters of the provinces except when provided for under the Act of 1935.

8. Telegram to Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
1 November 1946

In view of grave developments in Bengal situation with possibility of general strike in Calcutta[2] Sardar Patel and I feel that we should visit Calcutta immediately during weekend to confer with our colleagues and if possible avert developments which might lead to still more serious consequences. Would like start tomorrow morning by air.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 399-PS/46-PMS. Wavell was on a tour of Bengal at this time.
2. On 31 October 1946, a meeting of several prominent citizens of Calcutta, under the chairmanship of Sarat Chandra Bose, called for a general strike from 4 to 13 November in protest against the failure of the Government to prevent lawlessness in various parts of Bengal since 16 August 1946.

9. The Riots in Bengal[1]

I have never been so silent for so long when I felt so strongly as I have been during the last few days. If anybody has mistaken my silence, he does not know me. What has happened in other parts of India and more so in Eastern Bengal has been so ghastly that it is even sufficient to wake up the dead. I am not dead; I am very much alive.

1. Interview to the press at Dum Dum airport, Calcutta, 2 November 1946. *The Hindu*, 3 November 1946.

10. To Liaquat Ali Khan[1]

Calcutta
3 November 1946

My dear Nawabzada,
Yesterday Mr. Suhrawardy suggested a joint appeal for peace on behalf of us four who have come from Delhi. I think it was a good suggestion. I have drafted a statement[2] which might be issued, if it is agreed to, above our four names. This draft is enclosed. Will you kindly let me know if you and Mr. Nishtar agree to this?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. See the following item.

11. Appeal for Cessation of Violence[1]

Calcutta and East Bengal have called us for a long time and our minds and hearts have been full of the tragedies that have taken place in this great city and the premier province of India. We have come here at last on this brief visit to offer our homage to the innocent people who have suffered and to the brave spirits who have given help and succour at a time of grave peril and urgent need. We do not wish to say anything at this stage about controversial matters, for the situation is difficult and delicate and a wrong word may complicate it still further.

It is our duty, as it is of all others, to do the utmost that lies in us to put an end not only to the immediate peril but also to the basic causes which have given rise to them. We shall endeavour to do this to the best of our ability.

Meanwhile we venture to make an urgent and earnest appeal to all our countrymen, not only in Calcutta and Bengal but all over India. Much has happened in the recent past which has degraded Indian humanity and shamed us before others. Whatever our differences might be, none of us should tolerate acts which degrade and brutalise our people. That ignoble method brings no solution, and on that basis we can build no edifice of freedom. Violence against a neighbour and fellow citizen leads to counter and increasing violence and to the drying up of social and civil life. It leads to human degradation. We plead therefore most earnestly for a cessation of this violence and for a return to the methods of peace.

The news that has been coming from Bihar has also been distressing.[2] We are proceeding to Patna today to gain first-hand information.

1. This appeal, drafted by Nehru, was issued jointly by Nehru, Liaquat Ali Khan, Vallabhbhai Patel and Abdur Rab Nishtar at Calcutta on 3 November 1946 and published in all newspapers.
2. The reaction to the Noakhali atrocities was a major conflagration in Bihar.

12. Appeal for Communal Harmony[1]

All of you are shouting *Jai Hind* and 'Long Live Revolution'. But what sort of country do you want to build up? What kind of revolution are you trying to herald by all these communal disturbances that are prevailing in Bihar? It is shameful that Hindus should try to kill a handful of Muslims who are living as their neighbours in the province.

I appreciate courage and strength and want people to be courageous and strong. But this courage and strength has to be directed to proper channels and not frittered away in outbursts of communal frenzy.

I warn you that police will come and shoot you if you do not stop the murder, arson and loot that has been going on. I have dropped all my Delhi engagements till peace is restored in Bihar.

1. Speech at Fatwa, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.

13. No Room for Spirit of Revenge[1]

I wonder if people of Patna have gone mad. I have been told that what is happening in Bihar is only a retaliation for East Bengal. But this spirit of revenge is not proper. It is highly condemnable. I am of the opinion that there is an element of exaggeration in what is being published in papers regarding East Bengal. And further all possible steps are being taken to give protection to the Hindus over there and bring the culprits to book.

We are trying to build up a people's state where the labourers and kisans will come to occupy their rightful place. But if riots are allowed to continue that will spoil all our achievements.

1. Speech at Khusrupore, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.

14. The Responsibility of Leadership[1]

It is very good that I have come to meet you but the reason for which I have come is very regrettable—the bloodshed and riots which are taking place in the district. Is this a picture of the Swaraj for which you have been fighting? If the situation continues as it is the responsibility will be that of the leadership and I am prepared to take the onus if things do not improve. For that reason I have stayed on to appeal to you to stop your fratricidal quarrel.

You should try to cry halt at once to the prevailing disturbances.

1. Speech at Bakhtiarpur, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.

15. Destruction of the Mahatma's Work[1]

I condemn the spirit of revenge which is said to be responsible for the riots in Bihar. You claim to be the followers of Mahatma Gandhi but by all that is happening you are striking at the very basis of his work. You must control the situation and bring about peace and amity.

The slogan of *Jai Hind* you are shouting means an India where all the communities inhabiting the country will have the freedom to live their own lives according to their own conscience and religion.

1. Speech at Harnaut, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.

16. No Toleration of Lawlessness[1]

Wherever I go in the town I find panic amongst both the Hindus and Muslims. In the villages many Muslim houses are reported to have been burnt. What do you mean by all this? The responsibility for the disturbances lies on the Hindus as they are in a majority. And they must see to it that the disturbances are stopped forthwith here and now.

I assure Hindus that everything possible is being done for the protection and relief of the Hindus in East Bengal.

The Interim Government is doing its best to control the situation in the country. It is prepared even to resign if people want it to do so. But resignation will not help the cause. India has not as yet attained complete freedom. We have of course reached the threshold. But we have still to make efforts to gain full independence.

Lawlessness can never be tolerated. If the prevailing position does not improve and the communal incidents are not stopped forthwith by people many innocent lives will be lost. Machineguns, bombs and all the force of the Government will be put in motion to stop bloodshed.

I want to make it clear that mob rule cannot be allowed. No quarter will be given in this respect. A lathi on any neighbour is a lathi hurled at mother India; it is a lathi hurled at Mahatma Gandhi. This fact must be realised by all concerned.

I will stand in the way of Hindu-Muslim riots. Members of both the communities will have to tread over my dead body before they can strike at each other.

I hope that the disturbances will come under control very soon.

The first task before you is to restore peace and order and then you will have plenty of time to ventilate your grievances that would be given adequate hearing.

The Congress workers and people in general should go round the villages and bring round everyone to sanity. I do not want to hear from Congress workers that they cannot control people. If they cannot control they must sacrifice their lives in the attempt.

The goonda who sets fire to the house of his neighbour, who kills his friends is public enemy No. 1. He must be eliminated and all efforts must be concentrated to that end. I request you to live like good neighbours and realise the necessity of doing so.

1. Speech at Biharsharif, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.

17. Obstacles to Freedom[1]

I strongly condemn all that has been happening in Patna district and the province of Bihar during the last few days. By all that you are doing you are raising obstacles in the way of India's freedom. The communal disturbances must be stopped at once.

I have received a wire from Gandhiji wherein anxious enquiries have been made regarding the position in Bihar.[2] People should realise that Mahatmaji is greatly concerned about the condition in this province. They should see that his anxiety is removed as soon as possible.

It is time not to argue and discuss but to quell the disturbances.

1. Speech at Jethli, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.
2. On 3 November 1946, Mahatma Gandhi sent a telegram to Nehru through the Chief Minister: "*Morning News* reports butchery by Hindus of Muslim passengers. Muslims fleeing from mob fury and Premier countenancing. Wire particulars."

18. Do not Force Government to Act[1]

The East Bengal happenings are said to have had their repercussions on Bihar. Measures have been taken to control the situation in Bengal. But there is no justification why people here should try to have revenge. This is something I cannot understand.

It is regrettable that after having reached the doors of freedom we are doing something that will block our onward march. This must be realised and steps be taken to improve the situation at once. I repeat the warning emphatically that if the disturbances do not stop through the efforts of the people they will have to be stopped by the Government, if necessary, with the help of machineguns, bombs, aeroplanes and all the machinery at the disposal of the Government. It is neither proper nor dignified that the Government should be forced to this position. It is desirable that people stop the disturbances through their own efforts.

On the Bakrid festival,[2] you all should be careful and see that no incident takes place anywhere.

1. Speech at Patna, 4 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 6 November 1946.
2. Bakrid was celebrated on 5 November 1946. It went off on the whole peacefully.

19. Warning to Rioters[1]

I wish to make it clear that the Government will take the most stringent measures to quell the disturbances. If the rioters do not repent for their acts and behave properly, the Government will not show any mercy towards them and they will be fired upon and bombed from the air if necessary.

It is very shameful for you to resort to acts of lawlessness. You are seriously mistaken if you think that Swaraj means the freedom to cut the throats of the people with whom you disagree. The shouts of *Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai* or *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Ki Jai* do not sound pleasing to my ears when I know that you have indulged in acts of violence instead of sacrificing your lives to protect your Muslim brethren. By these acts you have proved traitors to your country and placed serious obstacles on the path of Swaraj.

I want an assurance from you that you will give adequate protection to the Muslims even at the cost of sacrificing your all instead of thinking and acting in terms of retaliation for the happenings in East Bengal.

1. Speech at Poonpoon, 4 November 1946. From the *Hindusthan Standard* and *The Hindu* of 6 November 1946. Nehru spoke on similar lines the same day at Nadaul and Jahanabad.

20. Communal Frenzy Delays Swaraj[1]

Friends, you receive me with cries of *Bandemataram, Jai Hind* and *Jawaharlal Ki Jai!* These very lusty shouts do not please me any more. The sturdy peasants, those indefatigable fighters of freedom, those sacrificing millions of Bihar, who toiled and tilled and bore a heavy burden, have gone astray, gone mad with communal frenzy, which I cannot conceive of even.

I heard that some want to avenge wrongs done in East Bengal districts. Governmental machinery is being accelerated to bring evil-doers to proper justice and relief and succour were being made available to sufferers. It is all the more astonishing and astounding, I consider it to be bad enough, that such things, which made the common foe of all communities—British Imperialism—laugh in unholy glee, should have at all happened. This frenzy has delayed the whole scheme of Swaraj.

1. Speech at a public meeting at Taregna (Bihar), 5 November 1946. From the *Hindusthan Standard*, 6 November 1946; also printed in *New India Speaks* (Calcutta, 1947), pp. 51-52.

India is just at the gate of Swaraj after over 50 years of sacrifices, trials and tribulations. These unhappy incidents of murder, loot and arson have blackened the chequered history of Taregna whose people almost attempted to bang the door of Swaraj. I am convinced that such misdeeds will be responsible if the chariot of freedom gets clogged half-way.

Who is happy now over such inhuman behaviour, over the killing of man by man, over setting fire to neighbours' homesteads and over creating enemies of friends of long standing? It is neither of the two communities, but behind this sordid drama of bestial beings, of passionate fanatics, gloated the British masters who want to prove to the world that in India the persons of two major communities are unable to settle accounts among themselves, even if freedom comes to their door. Whatever might have happened, I want every individual, irrespective of caste and creed, to take a solemn vow to arrest the tide of communalism and to stop loot and arson. Otherwise, the Congress, built on sacrifice and self-immolation of patriots for over half a century, will be tarnished and the fair name of Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of truth and non-violence and the torch-bearer of love, will be painted in black.

I can hardly imagine how the beast of man did suddenly get over all sense of humanity and decorum and indulged in man-killing.

The hymn of hate and mutual suspicion must be stopped. Any vandalism must be checked with adequate machinery. If required to control fresh recrudescence of communal trouble the Government will not hesitate to employ mighty military forces to suppress such hooliganism. No Government can ever tolerate any lawlessness or anarchy.

As for myself I will never allow any repetition of communal massacre anywhere on this earth. I have suspended all my engagements and I will go from village to village in Bihar to prevent communal riots.

In case any man seeks to kill his compatriot, he will have to murder Jawaharlal first and then, by trampling over his corpse, he would be able to satisfy his lust for blood.

21. On the Situation in Bihar[1]

Soon after my arrival here on the third evening, I sent a telegram to Mahatma Gandhi[2] in reply to an enquiry of his. This enquiry related to a specific

1. Statement to the press, Patna, 5 November 1946. *The Hindu*, 6 November 1946.
2. Nehru sent the following reply to Mahatma Gandhi: "Report in *Morning News* grossly exaggerated and vague. Government here is doing its utmost, but situation tense and grave in many places. Am staying on here with Nishtar. Vallabhbhai and Liaquat Ali going on to Delhi."

instance and I find considerable prominence has been given in the local press to my reply and it has been taken to apply to the whole Bihar situation. I want to make it clear that this was not my intention and I would not speak of the whole situation on arrival here without fuller knowledge.

While exaggeration is undoubtedly bad and must be avoided, to underrate what has happened or is happening is also bad and dangerous.

What has happened and is happening in certain parts of Bihar is terrible, and I can hardly believe that human beings can behave so.

We have to put an end to this madness immediately and then we can argue about it later. Any person who minimises the gravity of the situation here does no service.

22. Quench the Fire of Communalism[1]

Unless the people of Bihar make active and sincere efforts even now to quench the fire of communalism and violence it would lead to a huge conflagration fanned by ill will, hatred and distrust and would burn to ashes every one of them in the end along with all that had been achieved by the sacrifices of so many of their countrymen.

Twelve years back I visited Monghyr when a great natural calamity in the shape of a great earthquake devastated your district.[2] Today I am again here to witness the distressing effects of another calamity brought about by human beings by their actions against their fellow brethren. In cases of natural calamities everyone comes to the help of his fellow beings but what is the result when brothers run at each other's throat?

Do you propose to repeat the unfortunate happenings in Bengal by killing the Muslims in Bihar? Is this the way in which you are showing your culture and civilisation of which you are so proud? I am sorry to think that those who will suffer for their misdeeds will be the simple-minded, unsophisticated kisans who have been hoodwinked and misguided by their leaders who incite them at the cost of the country's cause.

You should be ashamed of your acts of lawlessness. I urge upon you to cry a halt even now and restore peace.

1. Speech at a public meeting at Monghyr, 5 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 9 November 1946.
2. Nehru had visited Monghyr on 22 January 1934.

23. The Message of Peace and Unity[1]

I have been touring in the districts of Patna, Monghyr and Bhagalpur and what I see and hear has horrified me. Terrible events happened in Bihar. The present riots have defamed India and Bihar. How can we look eye to eye at other nations in face of these riots? Swaraj is not far off but is this the picture of independence that we are going to present?

Enquiries in East Bengal riots are being made. It is true events are horrible there but retaliation is no remedy. Retaliators are either enemies of the country or fools. No Government can survive in this way. Is it not a shame to take the help of British soldiers for protection of our countrymen? Hindu dharma cannot be saved in this way nor does Hindu religion teach to kill others. I love the kisans of Bihar, but have they also gone mad?

Riots have broken out not only in towns but in villages also. Mahatma Gandhi is greatly pained over these events. To kill the helpless means to give acute pain to Mahatmaji.

I appeal to students and young men to go to the interior of villages with the message of peace and Hindu-Muslim unity. Give all help to refugees. Serve women and children.

1. Speech at Bhagalpur, 5 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 7 November 1946.

24. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

Patna
November 5, 1946

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I enclose a copy of the letter Bapu has sent me.[2] After receiving this I telephoned to him and gave him our joint message.[3] This was to the effect that he should not precipitate matters at this stage. He should wait for our report and see what developments there are during the next few days.

This letter will be taken by Nishtar tomorrow morning. Nishtar has been accompanying me throughout these two days. I must say that he has behaved very well[4] and wherever he has spoken, either in public meetings or in small

1. J.N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.
2. On 5 November 1946, Mahatma Gandhi wrote: "Much as I would try, I cannot brush aside the thought of a fast. Today is the seventh day since I declined to myself both milk and cereals....No thought be wasted over my impending death."
3. See *ante*, item 11.
4. On 2 November 1946, Abdur Rab Nishtar, along with Nehru ,Vallabhbhai Patel and Liaquat Ali Khan, arrived in Calcutta. He appealed for cessation of violence and for return to the methods of peace, visited some relief centres operating in Calcutta and later on visited some of the affected parts in Patna.

gatherings, he has not said anything to which I could take exception. We have seen and heard many things which are horrible and which could easily unnerve many individuals, especially a Muslim. But he kept his end up throughout.

My programme is entirely uncertain but I feel strongly that having taken this matter in hand I must not leave Bihar till we see light.[5] I am here anyhow tomorrow and the day after. So at the earliest I might return on Friday or I might stay on for another day or two. It is better that I do one job well than two or three jobs badly. In any event, unless the unforeseen happens, I should be back by the end of the week.

Rajendra Babu is also rather vague about the length of his stay here.[6] I suppose he will remain for two or three days. Kripalani is of course also here. They are both going to Biharsharif tomorrow and will spend the night there. I shall be going to Gaya tomorrow by air coming back in the evening.

These two days here have been so full of horror for me that I find it difficult to believe in the reality of things I must believe in. What the Muslim League people told us was wrong[7] and exaggerated here and there, but the real picture that I now find is quite as bad, and something even worse than anything that they had suggested. In the affected areas, that is Patna district, in a part of Monghyr district and in Gaya, there has been a definite attempt on the part of Hindu mobs to exterminate the Muslims. They have killed, indiscriminately, men, women and children *en masse*. Some stories are incredibly brutal and inhuman. Indeed one can only explain all this by saying that a madness had seized the people. I have addressed some large crowds in the rural areas and I have no doubt that many of them had participated in this bad business. They were the ordinary peasant folk of Bihar, very simple, unsophisticated, and rather likable. They shouted *Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai* and when I spoke sternly to them they seemed full of shame for what they had done. Almost everywhere after my speech I asked them to pledge themselves to behave in future and they seemed to do so with some conviction, raising their hands all together. Occasionally there were a few troublesome elements,

5. Nehru returned to Delhi from Patna on 9 November 1946.
6. Rajendra Prasad had to extend his Bihar tour as he had been ill in Patna since 9 November 1946. He returned to Delhi on 19 November 1946 to attend the Working Committee meeting.
7. The Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League at its meeting on 3 November adopted a resolution viewing with concern "the general massacre" of the minority community "including women and children in a number of districts in Bihar". The resolution asserted that the minority community was being wiped out in village after village. Even refugees and those travelling by train were being killed, and the Bihar government had failed to protect the minorities and maintain peace, law and order.

usually some educated people of the Hindu Sabha variety. Some Marwaris in Monghyr were obviously trouble-makers.

It is obvious that this big uprising could not come out of nothing. I could not make out who were the leaders of this business. Probably they are mostly local village leaders but they have received their inspiration from others. It is stated that apart from some Hindu Sabha elements, some landlords backed these disturbances partly to divert the attention of their tenantry from agrarian problems, partly to discredit the Ministry. It is also said that the black-market elements also gave encouragement.

A few Congressmen, of Hindu Sabha inclinations, are strongly criticised. On the other hand some Congress workers have done excellent work in the face of grave difficulty.[8]

There is an impression, which I think is justified, that local officials in many places, and especially the I.C.S. elements, moved very slowly. Probably they enjoyed the fun of a Congress Ministry getting discredited.

It is impossible to say what the total number of deaths is. But it must be a very large number. I doubt if it is under 2000 and it may be double that number. Some small Muslim villages have been completely wiped out. One of the peculiarly standing features is that a considerable number of Momins have been killed.

The number of Muslim refugees is very large. I do not know what it is but it may well go up to fifteen thousand in various places and the problem of looking after them, feeding them, clothing them and finding accommodation for them as well as guarding them is a difficult one.

The military are coming into the scene with fairly adequate forces now, or they will begin to function in a big way in about two days time. As I told you, there is news of their firing on a mob today, inflicting 400 deaths. We have not got correct figures yet. In a couple of days time all the affected areas will be sufficiently held by the military which will reach even the villages in the interior of these areas.

My own rough guess is that the next three days will see the end, more or less, of the active part of the disturbances. This not only for military reasons but also partly because of other efforts. Of course the ill will that has been generated and the terrible effects of this horror will last a long time.

I do not know what is happening to my particular work in the Assembly. I wish you would deal with it if it is urgent.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. Congressmen like Girish Tiwari, Prabhunath Singh, Kamna Rai, Dwaraka Nath Tiwari, Lakshmi Narayan Sinha and others tried bravely to control the situation in the district of Saran. In Patna the efforts of Jagat Narayan Lal, Singheshwar Prasad, Ram Lakshman Sharma and others bore fruit.

25. To Padmaja Naidu[1]

Patna
5.11.1946

My dear,

Why exactly I am writing to you just at this present moment, nearing midnight, when I am tired out, I do not quite know. But suddenly after the excessive strain of the last two days I had a feeling of reaction and relaxation and I thought of you and wanted to write.

This evening I returned by air from Bhagalpur. On arrival I learnt that the military had fired on a peasant mob in the rural areas some miles from here, and about 400 had been killed. Normally such a thing would have horrified me. But would you believe it? I was greatly relieved to hear it! So we change with changing circumstances as layers of fresh experience and feeling cover up the past accumulation.

I have had horror enough during the past two days. Something incredible has happened here, or something that I would have refused to believe in, a few days ago. Hindu peasant mobs have behaved in a manner that is the extreme of brutality and inhumanity. How many have been done to death by them I do not yet know, but it must be a vast number. To think that the simple, unsophisticated, rather likable Bihar peasant can go completely mad *en masse* upsets all my sense of values.

For a few days they had it their own way, with few checks or hindrances. And so when the news came that they have been stopped at last in one place and that 400 of them had died, I felt that the balance had been very slightly righted.

I do not know how long I shall stay here—I have forgotten Delhi and all else for the moment. All I am concerned with is Bihar at present. As soon as I see light here I go back to Delhi.

I am very tired and sleepy now.

Love,

Jawahar

1. Padmaja Naidu Papers, N.M.M.L.

26. Appeal for Good Neighbourliness[1]

It is a matter of shame for me to come down here and ask you to observe the basic principles of civilised conduct when so many problems, national and international, are facing us and need solution. Things which even a child understands have to be repeated to you at this stage—that you should not kill your neighbour or set houses on fire or loot property which does not belong to you. My mind is busy with the great problems facing India. There are the questions of establishing new relations with foreign countries[2] and other matters relating to the future organisation of the world that are being discussed at New York.[3] India has to play an important part in these affairs. But no less important are the internal problems of poverty, illiteracy, disease and a host of other points that have to be solved. At such a crucial hour in the history of the nation I have to come to Bihar to impress upon you an elementary law of life: Do not kill your neighbour. This has to be impressed upon those who have fought for the country's freedom and have been shouting "Long live revolution". How surprising and at the same time how sad!

You should realise that you have by your conduct reached the stage of animality when nothing but the primal instinct of preserving one's life works to the exclusion of the rest. No, but you are even worse than animals as animals at least do not attack in a herd. This is not the standard of a civilised nation. If any Hindu or Muslim thinks that he is saving his religion by all these communal riots, let him make himself happy. But it all appears very low by the yardstick of civilised behaviour. By no standard of civilised conduct can acts of lawlessness and killing of neighbours be justified. There can be no justification for stooping to bestiality, simply because some of your fellowmen have lost their heads elsewhere. I have heard students and other "ism"-*wallahs*[4] shouting slogans, but what is happening in this province is pure and simple hooliganism and it is your first and foremost duty to stop it at once and at all costs. To fix the responsibility on the hooligans alone is not enough. You cannot shift the responsibility by simply saying that you did not take part in it individually. Everyone is responsible for the tragedy.

1. Speech at a public meeting at Patna, 6 November 1946. From *The Searchlight* and *The Hindu*, 7 November 1946.
2. It was announced on 23 October 1946 that the Governments of India and the U.S.A. had decided to raise the status of their respective diplomatic missions to the rank of embassies.
3. Vijayalakshmi Pandit led the Indian delegation to the meeting of the United Nations General Assembly which began its session at New York on 23 October 1946. Among the subjects of discussion were the question of new entrants to the U.N.O., and the attempt of the small powers to secure abolition of the veto right of the Great Powers.
4. Persons professing ideologies.

The onus is also on the leadership for if the leaders get the adulation, they must also bear the opprobrium. If they cannot control the situation, it will certainly go against them.

What happened in Noakhali is certainly bad enough, but surely that cannot wash away the sins committed in Bihar. I fail to understand how the simple-minded kisans of Bihar are maddened in this way to behave like beasts. I have heard shouts of *Delhi Chalo*[5] from them. But their actions have made Delhi distant for us for the time being, as I cannot go back to Delhi leaving things as they are after what I have heard and seen in Bihar.

It will take time to discuss the genesis of the trouble. The first task before us is to extinguish the fire that has enveloped the province. I am not perturbed over the killing as everyone has to die one day or the other. But what I am concerned about is the direction in which the country is being forced by these riots. The reports that I received have shocked me greatly and I have been questioning myself—Is my confidence in the nation and the people misplaced? No, I think it is all a temporary phase of madness. This is bound to be cured. But then if people have gone mad, how can they be entrusted with power? How can the destiny of the country be placed in their hands? A mad man has to be sent to the madhouse so long as he is mad. To escape that position and justify their capacity for responsibility people must return to sanity at once.

There is an atmosphere of suspicion prevailing in the province. People have met me in the villages and even in the town of Patna itself expressing their fear of their neighbours. It appears both Hindus and Muslims are panicky and are conjuring nightmares. All fear must be shaken off as fear is the greatest evil and it paralyses strength and ultimately leads to destruction. There was a time when people were suffering from political fear and lived in fear of the magistracy and the police. But then came the Mahatma and helped them to conquer this fear. Must they now be afraid of their neighbours? I regret that the fear of the ruling race, which has been dispelled by the untiring efforts of Mahatma Gandhi, should now be supplanted by the fear of their own countrymen. For the good of the country, if not for anything else, this fear must be expelled for good. You should shed all fear and discontinue shouting of slogans which create panic for the time being. No country can progress if its people are afraid of each other.

India is now a powerful country. She has become dynamic. She is expanding, not of course to enslave other countries but for her own full development. Her energies have been released. Now, no one can stop her onward march. There is, however, the danger that her energies may be diverted to wrong channels against which people must guard. But I am sure that this new India, this mighty India, energetic and strong, will enable people to rise above

5. Go back to Delhi.

their present fear from which they have come to suffer. A nation in its collective expansive move sweeps away many of the shortcomings of its members. And I am confident people will begin to live as good neighbours.

It is regrettable that people by their actions have forced the hands of the Government to resort to force and summon military aid to control the situation. No Government, either of Hindus or Muslims, can tolerate lawlessness and is bound to take repressive measures and use force for restoring peace. When the Government has to follow such a course by firing, machine-gunning and bombing people, both the innocent and the guilty have to suffer. Such a course surely cannot be desirable for the people, but will be inevitable if acts of lawlessness continue. I assure you that nothing will happen in Patna. The situation will be controlled within two or three days by the Government. Adequate arrangements have been made to control any unseemly situation. But still it is your imperative duty to see that the disturbances are stopped as a result of your own efforts. Slogans are a sign of fear. And as their shouting creates panic I request you not to do so. Discountenance rumours. Organise defence committees if you like, but be courageous. Your enemy will not attack you if you stand face to face. Even an animal attacks only when you are trying to run away and show your back.

I hope that disturbances will stop very soon. But then the aftermath of strained feelings will remain for some time. It is the duty of all concerned to restore good relations.

I request the students to stop their studies for a few days and go round the rural areas for bringing the people back to their senses and restoring peace and sanity. Even if a few of you die in such an endeavour, it will be worth it, and I shall personally congratulate you for such acts of sacrifice.

27. Retaliation—A Medieval Practice[1]

The sturdy people of the *diaras* should not stoop so low as to attack helpless neighbours. The fact that you are a vigorous and manly people imposes greater responsibility on you to see that you not only do no harm to your defenceless brethren but protect them from being harmed. If your own hands are unclean with the blood of the innocent how can you raise an accusing finger at the misdeeds of goondas in East Bengal? Two wrongs will not make one right. The excesses committed in East Bengal do not justify what has taken place in Bihar. Retaliation is a medieval practice and does not fit in with modern enlightened society. After decades of struggle we have almost won the

1. Speech at a public meeting at Dinapur, 6 November 1946. From *The Searchlight*, 8 November 1946.

freedom of the country. But I am worried that if people behave in the way they are doing in some parts of Bihar today freedom will be hardly worth it. Freedom entails a very great responsibility on the people. The first duty of any civilized government is to maintain law and order. No Government worth its name will allow disturbances like the present one to continue. It will use all its resources and all the force it can command to restore peace. But it will be a matter of shame for this province if firing and machine-gunning have to be resorted to for this purpose. It will be much better that people control their passions and come to their senses. That will be a sign of their moral strength. I, Jawaharlal, appeal to you to exert yourself for restoring tranquillity in Bihar and instil confidence among your neighbours so that you may live with a sense of security.

28. Cooperate with the Army[1]

You should maintain communal peace and harmony. You are losing the chance of obtaining real Swaraj by frittering away your energy in a fratricidal war in which neighbours feel afraid and insecure of each other. Stern measures will be taken to restore peace and order by the Government. If forces of retaliation do not cease, aerial bombardment would be resorted to and Government would maintain order at any cost. If neighbours cannot confide in neighbours, Swaraj would be meaningless.

The students should give up studies for some time and go to villages to establish goodwill among the villagers. Bihar kisans are simple folks and their instigators to communal strife are traitors to the country. Religion being personal, it should not retard India's freedom, and Indian kisans whether Hindus or Muslims have the same grievances to be redressed.

It was in Bihar that Gandhiji launched his satyagraha at Champaran for the first time in India. I appeal to you to cease the fratricidal fight.

You should fraternise and cooperate with the army in restoring peace and order. Military personnel are your friends, because with the changed circumstances no barrier exists between you and the army.

Question: Why did you not go to Noakhali?

Jawaharlal Nehru: What have you done? I have done and I have been doing my best for East Bengal.

1. Speech at Gaya, 6 November 1946. From *Hindusthan Standard*, 8 November 1946 and *The Searchlight*, 9 November 1946.

29. Note on Recent Events and Disturbances in Bihar[1]

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Bihar is a province with a sturdy and yet a very poor peasantry. They are a likable people, easily led and sometimes easily misled. Perhaps more than anyone in India, they have a capacity for mass functioning. Mass psychology pervades them and, if an idea gets hold of the people, they are prepared to act *en masse* in furtherance of that idea. Hence there have been strong agrarian movements in Bihar and occasionally upheavals, communal or otherwise.

2. Ever since 1917 when Mahatma Gandhi successfully led the movement against plantations (chiefly European) in Champaran district, he has been tremendously popular with the people of this province. From that time onward also the Bihar peasantry took to the Congress, and the Congress in Bihar progressively reflected the agrarian demands of the peasantry. In the Congress itself in the province a strong left-wing group grew up which went even further in regard to the agrarian demands.[2] Lately the Congress, all over India, adopted as its programme the ending of the Zamindari system.[3] Thus this left-wing programme became the official programme of the Congress in this matter. There has, however, been considerable delay in giving effect to it and some dissatisfaction results as a consequence. Lately there has been a special agitation among the peasants over what is known as the Batai system under which the produce is shared. Some have urged the tenants to cut their crops even when they are not entitled to do so under law. On the other hand the Zamindars have shown great resentment at the proposal of the Bihar Government to abolish the Zamindari system.

3. There have been in the past some major communal riots in Bihar, notably at Shahabad about 1917, when the Hindu peasantry rose and killed a large number of Muslims. Normally the Hindus and Muslims in Bihar have lived very peacefully together and no communal question arises. The usual

1. Written at the Circuit House in Patna on 6 November 1946. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. From 1930 to 1934 the Congress leaders in Bihar identified themselves with the cause of the peasants. Subsequently the socialists came forward to give additional support to the kisan movement. The Council of Action of the Bihar Socialist Party, in 1934, considered it "essential to organise the masses into Kisan Sabhas and labour unions with a view to bring pressure on the powers that be for the redress of their grievances".
3. On 25 September 1946 the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution asking Provincial Governments to send proposals for reform of the land system beginning with the abolition of the zamindaries.

conflict is between the tenant and the landlord. But over a religious issue, like cow-killing, passionate feelings have been aroused in the past among the Hindus. The effect of the Congress movement from 1919 onwards was to improve communal relations greatly. Some of the prominent leaders of the Congress in Bihar, notably Dr. Rajendra Prasad, were respected and liked by Muslims and Hindus alike. A change has gradually come over the scene since the new policy of the Muslim League during the last few years. Even in the general elections of 1937 the Muslim League failed badly. A large independent group of Muslims was elected and this kept apart from the League and was on the whole friendly to the Congress, which included in its ranks a number of Muslim members in the Legislatures.

4. Since the Muslim League adopted Pakistan as its objective[4] and started even before that an agitation based on hatred and bitter denunciation of the Congress as well as of the Hindus generally, reactions gradually began to set in which were taken advantage of by the Hindu Mahasabha and like organizations. This did not affect the widespread popularity of the Congress among the Hindu masses so far as the political issues were concerned. But it did produce communal feeling and a tendency among the middle class to criticize the Congress for not supporting the Hindu cause as against the Muslim League.

5. As the communal and political situation developed during the last seven years, a feeling of exasperation took hold of the Hindus at what they considered the unpatriotic and highly objectionable attitude of the Muslim League. They read from day to day violent attacks in the press made by leaders of the League on Hindus as well as the Congress and all manner of threats to achieve Pakistan by force. One of the Muslim slogans was and is *Pakistan Khun se Lenge* (We shall take Pakistan through blood). There were also attacks and denunciations of the Hindu religion and practices. This feeling percolated, to some extent, even to the Hindu masses in Bihar. Never too docile, the peasantry reacted rather aggressively to it but was kept in check by Congress leaders. Among the Muslims also a fairly considerable movement arose among the Momins, or the weaver class, which refused to associate itself with the League and was on the whole friendly to the Congress and cooperated with it. They rejected the idea of Pakistan.

6. Events from 1942 onwards convinced the Hindu masses in Bihar, as elsewhere, that the Muslim League was a barrier not only to the freedom of their country but to the achievement of their own social demands. The

4. At the annual session of the Muslim League in Lahore in March 1940, Jinnah declared that democracy was unsuited to India; that "the Muslims are a nation, according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their state." Thereafter the "Pakistan Resolution" was passed.

Muslim League leadership was very largely socially reactionary and consisting of the landlord class. The appeals to hatred on behalf of the Muslim League brought about a like reaction among the Hindus.

7. This has been the background of recent events. The events in Calcutta from the 16th August onwards resulted in the killing of a large number of Biharis in Calcutta. Many of their shops were also looted in Calcutta. Many of the *gwalas* (milkmen), the cartmen, the *rikshaw-wallas* and the *darwans* or door-keepers in Calcutta were Biharis. There is also in Bihar a large Bengali Hindu population. The news of this killing in Calcutta affected Biharis profoundly. The relatives of those killed returned to Bihar as well as other refugees. They spread out in the rural areas carrying stories with them of what had happened in Calcutta. This created a feeling of great resentment throughout the province.

8. On top of this came news of Noakhali and East Bengal, more especially the accounts of forcible conversion of large numbers of people and abduction and rape of Hindu women. This kind of thing is likely to inflame any people anywhere. Hindus especially are more affected by anything involving abduction and rape of women and forcible conversion. The Biharis became terribly excited and the Bengali element in Bihar was even more excited.

9. There was some propaganda on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha and other Hindu organizations after Noakhali. Many anonymous leaflets were issued asking for revenge for what happened in East Bengal and public criticism was directed to the passivity of the Central Government in allowing matters to proceed in East Bengal without intervention. The Interim Government was especially attacked for its seeming inactivity when horrible things were happening in Noakhali. A feeling grew that nobody was helping the helpless Hindus of East Bengal while the Provincial Government of Bengal was deliberately pursuing a policy of exterminating Hinduism from East Bengal either by killing or by forcible conversion. It is immaterial how far these facts were true. The point is that there was a strong feeling and the stock of the Interim Government fell very greatly.

One notice, purporting to be issued on behalf of the Muslim League, was widely circulated in many parts of India and especially in Bihar. This gave instructions to kill Hindus, loot their property and do various other highly objectionable things in order to establish Pakistan. Who issued this notice, nobody seems to know. But apparently it came from Bengal. It is unlikely that anyone on behalf of the Muslim League could issue such a notice. However this may be, many of the Hindus who read it did not doubt that it did come from the Muslim League because they could believe anything about the Muslim League. They became utterly convinced that the Muslim League was bent on indulging in the most heinous crime in pursuance of its policy

of direct action. This, they thought, had to be resisted at every cost and, if the other party was going to be so thoroughly unscrupulous, the Hindus should not stick to scruple either.

10. Towards the end of September there was an incident at Benibad in Patna district. The Hindus suspected a Muslim Zamindar of having abducted a Hindu girl from Calcutta. Demands were made for the girl to be produced. Ultimately he promised to do so after two or three days. On the appointed day a crowd went to his place. They found, however, that the girl had been removed and the Zamindar also had gone. Thereupon the crowd got completely out of hand and attacked the house and destroyed it and a number of Muslims were killed. A large number of persons were arrested for this and are under trial. Compensation was given by the local Government to the family of the Zamindar and others concerned. In all Rs. 40,000/- were given—Rs. 20,000/- as a gift and Rs 20,000 as loan without interest.

11. On or about the 25th October a Noakhali Day was observed in various parts of Bihar.[5] A huge procession was taken out in Patna and a very big meeting was held. Though the official slogans and speeches were more or less restrained, many other slogans were heard asking for revenge for Noakhali. Some of the speeches were not restrained.

12. On or about the 26th of October trouble broke out in Chapra, both in the town and surrounding district.[6] This was controlled within a day or two and nothing much has happened since then. In Bhagalpur city there was also a communal riot soon after Chapra. This was soon suppressed.

13. Real trouble started in the Patna district on the 31st October. This came rather suddenly and was on a big scale. It spread from day to day, covering a large part of the district, overflowing into Gaya and Monghyr districts. It was in a sense a mass uprising, in certain affected areas large numbers of peasants taking part. They attacked Muslim houses and burnt them down, killed Muslims and looted their property.

14. While it is clear that the basic cause of all this trouble, which affected a large number of people, was the intense feeling roused by stories about Noakhali and the resentment against the Muslim League policy and threats, there were probably a number of minor causes also which led to the rapid growth of this lawlessness. The agitation among the peasantry which had been going on for some time fed the larger movement. The Hindu tenants of Muslim Zamindars found an excuse for attacking their Zamindars. Curiously

5. In protest against the occurrences in Noakhali and Tipperah a representative meeting of the citizens of Patna held on 23 October 1946 decided to observe a 'black' Diwali, organise a hartal and hold meetings in the town on 25 October 1946.
6. A communal riot flared up in Karim Chowk at Chapra on 24 October 1946.

enough it would appear that certain Hindu Zamindars, and may be some Muslim Zamindars also, not realizing the consequences of what they were doing, wanted to take advantage of this movement to divert the attention of the peasantry from the agrarian demands. There was also a general resentment among the landlord class against the Provincial Government because of its policy in favour of abolition of the Zamindari system. Black-marketeers were also generally ill-disposed towards the Government, more specially in Chapra. There were a number of local and petty grievances also. All this went to feed the major grievance which was not against the Local Government at all.

15. It is not clear yet whether there were any leaders of this widespread movement, apart from local leaders. There is some evidence, however, of people going about on bicycles and otherwise distributing leaflets which contained incitement to the people. The movement had an appearance of a spontaneous uprising in various parts chiefly involving the peasantry. No well-known persons so far appear to be directly involved. At an early stage, however, certain known anti-social elements took the lead in certain areas. It is known that some notorious dacoits are participating and warrants are out for their arrest. These dacoits apparently possess some firearms which they have been using. The peasantry of course functioned chiefly with their lathis and sometimes with spears or other odd weapons.

16. When the main trouble started the Government was functioning in Ranchi, away from the seat of trouble. The Governor[7] about that time went to Bombay. For this and various other reasons, there was a slight delay in dealing with it. Probably there was no immediate realization of what was going to happen. The Prime Minister of Bihar went to Chapra very soon after the occurrence there. On the 31st October he made a request to the Military Officer in command for troops. The Brigadier,[8] however, did not think that any necessity had so far arisen. He said that the situation was not nearly so bad as yet as in 1942. However some patrolling was done by the troops. This was not very effective as the troops did not go beyond the main roads and trouble was in the interior.

17. During the first two or three days one had a sensation that governmental action was not as swift and effective as it might have been. Partly this was due to the absence of many of the Ministers as well as the Governor, partly to the suddenness of the outbreak, but partly, it appears, to the complacency of the permanent officers. Probably the criticism is not justified but it is asserted by a variety of people that some of these permanent officers

7. Sir Hugh Dow (1886-1978); I.C.S.; Secretary to the Government of India, Commerce Department, 1936-39; Governor of Sind, 1941-46; Governor of Bihar, 1946-47.
8. Brigadier Goodby, the Sub-Area Commander.

were not too greatly displeased at this new embarrassment of the Provincial Government. Many odd people indeed liked to see anything happen which might bring some discredit on the Ministry. An instance which brings out the slowness of the governmental apparatus during these first two days is that at a place where a Hindu mob killed about 25 to 30 Muslims on a railway platform, for over two days after this murder the bodies lay on the platform and nobody took the trouble to remove them. It was only after a Minister went there and saw these bodies for himself that they were removed under his express orders.

18. From the 31st October onwards trouble rapidly spread in Patna district and in part of Monghyr district. Muslim *basties* were burnt and looted and many Muslims were killed. This was a ruthless and inhuman affair and women and children even were not spared. People seemed to have gone mad. Large numbers of refugees poured into Patna and other relief camps opened by Government or by private organizations. These refugees were often in a pitiable state and naturally terribly panic-stricken and excited. They brought stories of horrible conditions prevailing in their areas. These stories were inevitably greatly exaggerated. Any person whom they knew and whom they did not see with them was presumed to be dead. Nevertheless allowing for all exaggeration what had happened was terrible enough. There were gross cases of cruelty and insensate behaviour.

19. On the other hand there were many cases also of Hindu villages affording protection to Muslims. In one case the Hindus of a village collected their Muslim neighbours for protection and violently resisted an attacking Hindu mob which wanted to get at those Muslims. They succeeded in protecting them. Many Hindus also helped in evacuating Muslims by carrying their baggage and otherwise assisting them in every way. Many Muslims testify to the help they received from the Hindus of their village.

20. In some instances the Muslims resisted with firearms or other means the Hindu mob attacking them. But generally speaking it can be said that there was very little Muslim resistance in the face of overwhelming numbers.

21. The situation was a very difficult one as the areas involved could not be easily reached, although they were not very far as distance goes. They were in the interior with no proper roads, and flooded areas surrounded them. Usually when armed police or a troop patrol approached a crowd this crowd rapidly dispersed and vanished into the fields. They did not offer any resistance except occasionally when there was that hard core of professional dacoits with firearms.

22. Large refugee camps for Muslim refugees have grown up in Patna and in various other areas. The problem of feeding and clothing them as well as of

protecting them from any further raids became an important one. On the whole it has been tackled successfully. In one case, however, a group of refugees being transported under some police protection was attacked by a mob and most of them were killed including some policemen.

23. On the 3rd November afternoon Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Mr. Liaquat Ali and Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar arrived in Patna. The news they received was so grave that it was decided that two of them, namely Nehru and Nishtar, should stay in Patna. On the 4th November these two accompanied by a Bihar Minister and other prominent local leaders visited some of the affected areas. They went to Biharsharif in the Patna district, stopping at many places and addressing public gatherings on the way. They also went to Jahanabad in Gaya district addressing large meetings *en route*. The next day, 5th November, they visited the badly affected areas in Monghyr district and also went to Bhagalpur. A meeting in Patna city was also addressed by them on November 4th.

24. These meetings held in the affected areas were very largely attended by the peasantry and they obviously produced effect. Nehru spoke strongly and at the end of every meeting induced the audience present to take a pledge, with arms upraised, not to indulge in any misbehaviour. Subsequent reports stated that these peasants who had so pledged themselves felt the weight of their promise and in fact told others that now that they had given their word they must act up to it. A certain improvement was thus noticeable, but large areas, especially in the interior, were not touched by these meetings, and a hard core of the lawless element would probably, in any event, not have been touched. So while there was a certain toning down in some areas, the trouble spread in other places adjoining them.

25. On the evening of the 5th November a conference was held at which General Bucher,[9] the G.O.C., Eastern Command, and General Ekin[10] were present. Among others present were the Prime Minister of Bihar, Anugrah Narain Singh, Minister, Bihar,[11] Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and Abdur Rab

9. General Sir Roy Bucher (1895-1980); Major-General in charge Administration, Southern Army, India, 1942-45; G.O.C., Bengal and Assam Area, 1946; Officiating G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Command, 1946 - January 1947; Chief of Staff, Army, India, August-December 1947; Commander-in-Chief, Army of India, 1948-49.
10. Major-General Roger Gillies Ekin (b. 1895); Commandant, Tactical School, India, 1940-41; commanded 46 Infantry Brigade, Burma Campaign, 1941-1942; Commanded Nowshera Brigade, 1942-45 and Kohat Independent Brigade, 1945-46; G.O.C., Bihar and Orissa Area, India, 1946-47.
11. (1889-1957); leading Congressman of Bihar; Finance Minister, Bihar Government, 1937-39 and from 1946 till his death.

Nishtar. Also the Chief Secretary[12] and the I.G. of Police of the Government of Bihar.[13] At this conference various measures were discussed and General Bucher explained how he proposed to use the troops at his disposal. He informed the conference that additional troops were coming and he intended visiting the affected areas and at the same time patrolling every place in those areas. Thus far the Provincial Government had found it very difficult to control the situation because of the insufficient forces at its disposal. There was no conflict between their forces and the mobs. In fact they could not even develop contact. The mob disappeared and functioned elsewhere. Now for the first time effective arrangements could be made to reach all the affected parts both to give protection to those who needed it and to control and suppress the elements giving trouble. Various other proposals were made at the conference and accepted. These included the application of Sec. 144 and curfew in certain rural areas. Also the requisitioning of private cars for patrol purposes.

26. Owing to the very large influx of Muslim refugees into Patna, the Hindus in Patna became rather frightened and expected some kind of an attack. Excitement and fear on both sides were heightened by the shouting of slogans throughout the night. But nothing has happened in Patna and nothing is likely to happen now, although tension continues. This kind of mutual fear exists in several towns.

27. On the 6th morning Nehru and Rajendra Prasad addressed two very largely attended meetings at Dinapore and Patna. Kripalani also addressed the latter meeting. These meetings produced a very good effect and, to some extent, allayed the tension. In the afternoon Nehru flew with Bucher to Gaya where there was a large meeting and a subsequent conference with local officers at which Anugrah Narain Singh was also present. Effective measures were decided upon for the affected areas of the Gaya district.

28. Rajendra Prasad and Kripalani went to Biharsharif on the 6th afternoon and proposed to return on the 7th. On the 7th morning Nehru, Bucher and Anugrah Narain Singh intend flying low over all the affected areas.

29. During the last two or three days there has been repeated firing by the Military and the Police on hostile Hindu mobs. Casualties are not yet known. Generally they have been low except on one occasion when they are said to approach 100.

12. John Bowstead (1897-1969); entered Indian Civil Service, 1921; Chief Secretary to Government of Orissa, 1940-44; Chief Secretary to Government of Bihar, 1945-46.
13. C.J. Creed (1894-1955); Deputy Inspector-General of Police, 1936; assumed charge of the Provincial Police Administration as Inspector-General, 1944; retired 1949.

30. The position on the 6th night is that on the whole the situation is quietening down, though there are pockets of trouble still. With the help of Government large numbers of Muslims are being brought from the outlying villages to Patna or to such other relief camps. Food and blankets are being given to them as well as medical attention. General Bucher has promised to help with medical supplies as well as doctors.

31. The troops stationed in various places are chiefly Indian troops, though there is a regiment of British troops also. General Bucher is cooperating in every way with the civil authorities and has impressed upon his troops the necessity for friendly relations with the people. The people have also been asked to cooperate with the troops who have come to help them. On the whole all steps being taken are cooperative and there is every hope that within a day or two the situation will be completely controlled.

32. There has been a danger of trouble spreading to other areas. Arrah is a particularly difficult district if any trouble takes place there. Fortunately nothing has happened there so far, except of course the usual tension. It is important to end the present trouble in the affected areas with extreme rapidity so as to avoid its spreading to Arrah or other places.

33. For the present our efforts are being concentrated on putting an end to trouble and lawlessness and to protecting the refugees and evacuees. Very soon, the problem of rehabilitating them will arise. It will be a difficult problem but the Provincial Government has every intention of dealing with it thoroughly.

34. In the course of various operations aeroplanes have been fully used for reconnoitring work. On one or two occasions tear-gas bombs were thrown from the aeroplanes over hostile mobs. They did not seem to frighten the crowd much.

35. Nehru is staying on in Patna for the present and so long as he feels that his presence might be of some help.

30. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

Patna
7 November 1946

My dear Vallabhbhai,
I enclose a copy of a report I am sending to Bapu.[2] It was hurriedly written last night. The news today is fairly satisfactory, but there are still two or three pockets of trouble where it appears that professional dacoits are functioning.

I flew over most of the affected areas and found them peaceful with people working in their fields. We saw two fires in empty villages.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-1950*, Vol. 3, p. 167.
2. See the preceding item.

31. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Patna
7.11.46

My dear Bapu,
I enclose a hurried report prepared last night. The news thus far has been fairly satisfactory. We flew over most of the affected areas and found them quite peaceful with people working in the fields but there are still 2 or 3 pockets of trouble. There evidently some people with guns are functioning. This must be the professional dacoit element.

The Viceroy is coming here today.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. Pyarelal Papers.

32. Further Note on Disturbances in Bihar[1]

CONFIDENTIAL

November 7, 1946

There has been a definite improvement in the situation and a great part of the affected areas is peaceful now and no incidents are reported. Also there has been no extension of disorder in new areas. But in some parts of the affected areas trouble still continues.

2. Nehru accompanied by Bucher and Anugrah Narain Singh flew over a great part of the affected areas this morning. The flight was a long one covering about 450 miles and lasting two and three quarters of an hour. They flew low so as to observe more closely. Patna district was fairly well covered by this flight as well as parts of Gaya district and Monghyr. The general outlook was very peaceful with peasants tilling the fields. No large crowds were seen anywhere. At one railway station there was a small crowd, possibly of refugees waiting for a train. At two places in Gaya district fires were noticed. Both seemed to be deserted. Probably arson was committed the day before.

3. It often happens that Muslim *basties* have been deserted and their occupants have moved to some refugee camp or to a large Muslim village. Some of these deserted quarters are then sometimes set fire to.

4. Rajendra Prasad and Kripalani returned from their visit to Biharsharif and beyond. They reported that in the villages Asthawan and Deshna, which they had visited and which were predominantly Muslim villages, large numbers of Muslims had collected from the neighbourhood. They were informed there that two neighbouring villages—Ramzanpur and Konar—were in some danger of an attack by Hindu mobs. Some military was stationed in Biharsharif and this had come into conflict with some of these mobs. There had been some firing also on both sides. Evidently some people in the crowd had guns. It was reported that the situation continued to be difficult in that area.

5. Apart from these two or three areas, reports from other centres were more or less satisfactory. Even in these areas no actual major incident was reported. There was apprehension of something happening. Steps were taken to send help to the various areas referred to above.

1. J.N. Collection.

AT DUMDUM AIRPORT, CALCUTTA, NOVEMBER 1946

...AMBOO BRIDGE IN NOAKHALI, JANUARY 1947

6. The problem of refugees is a big one and grows bigger. It is difficult to estimate their total number but this must be large. In Patna itself there must be 20 thousand to 25 thousand. In Biharsharif there are said to be 15 thousand to 20 thousand. Then there are numerous other smaller centres. All these have to be protected and fed and medical attention supplied to them. Also sometimes clothing and blankets. The Provincial Government has made itself responsible for all this and not only supplies necessaries to the various non-official camps but has organised its own camps. The attitude of the Muslim League has added to the existing difficulties. They do not want Muslim refugees, as far as possible, to go into the Government organised camps. And so they crowd them together, as in Patna, in unhealthy localities without any arrangement for sanitation. While they take food and all other kinds of help from the Government, they try to make out that Government is doing nothing at all for them.

7. This large collection of evacuees in the cities is likely to lead to dangerous insanitary conditions. It is also causing much anxiety in the minds of the Hindu population.

8. Another relatively minor problem to be faced now is the treatment of the injured from the police or military firing, chiefly the latter. The military are responsible for this and promise to look after them or bring them to civil hospitals. The actual number of casualties is not known. There may be two hundred or three hundred wounded. Exaggerated reports circulate in the city and excite the people. This adds to the prevailing tension.

9. While the military appeared to be acting with efficiency and urgency, the Police, and more especially the Police officials, are slow and give the impression of not cooperating fully. This applies more particularly to some European officials of the Police.

10. The position generally is that no major incidents are reported and over a very large area, previously affected, there are no incidents at all. At the same time in some more or less limited areas there is apprehension of trouble and it is reported that Hindu mobs gather with hostile intent. There is naturally considerable degree of panic and this breeds rumours and excited complaints.

11. Tomorrow morning, November 8th, Rajendra Prasad is going back to Biharsharif and then further to Shekupura etc. where there is some continuing apprehension. He will spend the night in those areas, returning on Sunday. Nehru accompanied by the Prime Minister and Jayaprakash will go to the hill side area, returning in the evening.

12. Maulana Azad arrived this afternoon. So also Jayaprakash. Kripalani is leaving for Allahabad and later for Delhi tomorrow, November 8th.

13. The Viceroy arrived this afternoon and saw various people. Nehru and Rajendra Prasad also met him. He is flying over the affected areas tomorrow morning and intends returning to Delhi on Sunday morning.

14. The Governor of Bihar returned yesterday. He had a long talk with Nehru yesterday evening in the course of which he expressed his opinion that this trouble was largely caused by the spirit of revolt spread in August 1942.

15. It is not decided yet when Nehru and Rajendra Prasad will return to Delhi.

16. Students in Patna are organising themselves for giving effective help by visiting the affected areas in groups as well as working in the city. Colleges are closed now but are likely to open very soon. It is proposed that they might start work a week later and meanwhile students might address themselves to the urgent task of carrying a message of peace to the rural areas.

33. Third Note on the Bihar Disturbances[1]

CONFIDENTIAL

8th November 1946

On the 8th morning Rajendra Prasad went in the direction of Biharsharif intending to go into the interior and to spend the night there. He is expected back at Patna on the 9th forenoon.

2. The Viceroy accompanied by the Governor and Nishtar flew over the affected areas in the morning.

3. Nehru, Jayaprakash and Anugrah Narain Singh went in the morning to Hilsa, stopping *en route* at some places. On the way they passed a crowded relief train full of Muslim evacuees being taken to Patna. At Hilsa they had talks with the Magistrate in charge, police officers, and Major Venning in command of the Madras Regiment who was there at the time. This Regiment has its headquarters at Gaya and has a small number spread out in various places in Gaya and Patna districts. Major Venning was the officer who ordered the firing two days earlier at Nagarnausa. Another officer was present who has been responsible for firing at hostile crowds previously at some other places. As these two officers had been mainly responsible for firing during the previous few days, they gave a full account of what had happened.

1. J.N. Collection.

4. Subsequently Nehru's party went to Nagarnausa, the centre of the firing, and met a number of villagers and some Congress workers who had been sent there to investigate. From them also they received accounts of the firing and the events that had preceded and followed it. The accounts varied but it was quite clear that the reports in the press about the firing were greatly exaggerated. It is a little difficult to give the exact number of casualties as firing took place at various places on several occasions, usually by a small platoon on a large crowd. Sometimes it was in the dark when the platoon was escorting a large number of Muslim evacuees which was attacked or thought it was being attacked by a hostile crowd. At Nagarnausa the estimate of deaths from firing varied from 40 to 100. I imagine that the latter figure was nearer the mark. Probably about 80 deaths took place at repeated firings in the course of the afternoon and the evening. The crowd usually took away the dead and the wounded and hence it was not easy to find out what the casualties were. At one other place in another area a major firing incident took place. Here also there were about the same number of casualties. If one adds a number of minor affrays, total deaths from firing might be about 200. At the outside they might reach 250.

5. There were many complaints by the Hindu residents of Nagarnausa of indiscriminate firing inside the village and even inside some huts. It was also stated that a few shops had been looted by the soldiery. That the shops were looted there is little doubt. Also firing had taken place inside the lanes. It is possible that a few soldiers misbehaved. It is equally possible that the Muslim evacuees, as they were leaving the village, took part in the looting.

6. The village Nagarnausa is a large village and it had at the time about 1200 Muslim residents as well as evacuees. The Hindus were twice the number. For some three days there had been continuous conflict between the Hindu side of the village and the Muslim. About ten to fifteen Hindus had died and twentyfive to thirty Muslims. A Hindu crowd from other villages had also been attacking the Muslims from outside. It was stated to us by some of the Muslims who had been there that they had been continuously struggling to save themselves from extermination for three days when the relief party sent by the military, consisting of 24 Madrasi soldiers, came. In the process of collecting and taking away these 1200 Muslims these soldiers fired repeatedly. A somewhat notorious Muslim resident of a neighbouring village was guiding the troops and probably he took advantage of this fact to satisfy his private grudges. There is little doubt that the Hindus in the village were in conflict with the Muslims and that a crowd of Hindus from other villages also invested them. Some of these latter are said to have guns also.

7. From Nagarnausa Nehru's party went to Diyawan, a big joint Hindu-Muslim village nearby. No Muslim had been evacuated from this village

and the Hindus of the village appeared to be on more or less good terms with them. The Muslims, however, had been living in a beleaguered state for some days for fear of external attack. Many evacuees from the smaller villages round about had come there. We were told that cholera was spreading. Nothing had happened in the village but there had been continuous apprehension of some thing happening.

8. The party then went to another large village with a considerable Muslim population. This was Karai-Parasurai. This happens to be the ancestral village of Sir Ali Imam's family. Here also the Muslims had remained and not evacuated. There had been no actual conflict with the local Hindus but feelings were strained and it was stated that outside mobs had repeatedly threatened an attack. The Muslims of the village suspected their Hindu neighbours of being in close association with the outsiders and distrusted them completely. One rather odd fact was pointed out by the Muslims as evidence of a Hindu conspiracy. In the main bazaar as well as elsewhere every Hindu house and shop had *Jai Hind* or some other slogans (including *Hinduon, Musalmano se Hoshiar Raho*)[2] written in Hindi over the door or on the wall. It is alleged that all this writing took place overnight and was meant to distinguish Hindu houses and shops in case of general looting and arson.

9. Medical supplies were badly needed everywhere and there was also a demand for food. There was also a new tendency visible which was hopeful. Muslims suggested that the evacuees should return to their villages where they still existed, so as to look after their property which they had left in a hurry and to cut their paddy crops which were ripe. There was danger otherwise of these being cut and taken by others. Thus the primary instinct of self-preservation was giving place to the love of property. This in itself was indication of the return of some measure of normality.

10. There is at present still a demand for evacuation of small groups of isolated Muslims, but generally speaking evacuation is over. The present demand is for Muslims to go back to some of their big villages and to be given adequate protection there. This obviously is better than to concentrate them in Patna or a few other places. But without military protection they do not want to leave their present camps. This depends then on the adequacy of material for protection. Probably this can be arranged for some of the bigger villages very soon and a little later for other areas.

11. During the last two days no major incidents have been reported, though telegrams continue to pour in of apprehension. Mostly these come from Muslims, but sometimes also from Hindus. As far as one can judge, the mass movement against the Muslims is over, though sporadic attacks

2. Hindus, beware of Muslims!

may take place, chiefly organised by criminal elements who indulge in looting and arson. The problems that are emerging, therefore, now are not so much of dealing with a mass upheaval but of organising a gradual return to normality. This will obviously take some time, provided always that nothing fresh happens to disturb this process. Nothing fresh should happen on any large scale, but in view of the prevailing tension, apprehension and mutual fear, minor incidents may grow up and lead to some conflict.

12. The problem of the evacuees in Patna is gradually being partly solved by the Muslim leaders accepting some of the Government arrangements for the evacuees. The Government have placed a large jail and another large house at the disposal of the evacuees. Between the two, these are said to be able to accommodate about 10 thousand persons. The question of food, clothing, blankets and medical supplies will continue to give trouble.

13. The recent news of firing on Hindu crowds, much exaggerated in the press, has greatly excited the Hindus of Patna. As evidence of this excitement some incidents occurred this evening on the return of Nehru's party to Patna. It had been arranged for them to meet some students with a view to organising them for relief work. As it happened, a very large crowd of students had gathered overflowing from the Senate Hall. Some of these received Nehru with cries of 'go back' and 'Jawaharlal *murdabad*'. They were relatively few in number but they made a lot of noise. However the meeting was successfully held and Nehru and Jayaprakash addressed them.

14. Soldiers of the Madras Regiment, mostly Hindus, have not at all liked the sights they have seen, that is, the large number of dead Muslims—men, women and children. Some of them were openly expressing their opinion that the Hindus here had acted in a brutal and disgusting manner and that they in Madras did not behave so.

15. There is some feeling against the soldiers of this and other Regiments and some complaints against them by the people. Probably some complaints are justified, others seem to be fanciful. There is a tendency for the Hindu and Muslim soldiers to behave slightly differently in accordance with their own communal sympathies. But this is not very marked and has not interfered with the discipline. On the whole the soldiery do not seem to have misbehaved much. They have had to face a difficult situation. It is possible of course that more instances of misbehaviour may be reported later when the immediate troubles are ended and patrols continue.

16. As has been stated above, the chances of any major incident or any large scale military action are now very little. This is due to many reasons —Gandhiji's announcement that he might fast, the personal appeals and visits of a number of Congress leaders, the good work done by some very

earnest Congress workers in the cities and villages, and finally, the fear of the military.

17. Nehru, Jayaprakash and Anugrah Narain Singh are going to Barh in the Patna district on the 9th morning. There is reported to be considerable tension there. On the 9th also there is a full-moon bathing festival there.

18. In view of the improving situation in Bihar and also in view of certain communal troubles and riots near Meerut in the U.P., Nehru is returning to Delhi by air on the 9th afternoon.

19. On the 8th evening there was a conference between the Ministers, some leading Muslim Leaguers, including Nishtar, Nazimuddin of Bengal, Yunus and Hussain Imam, and the military authorities. At this conference various problems referred to above were discussed and suggestions made. Nishtar is returning to Delhi on the 10th morning.

20. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad will probably stay on in Patna for the present.

34. Students and Relief Work[1]

I earnestly request you to give up your studies for the time being and go to the villages to give succour to the sufferers of the disturbances and do your best to restore peace. You should penetrate into the riot-affected villages of Bihar with medicines and other necessary relief equipment to help in the rehabilitation of life.

A storm has swept over and devastated several villages in some districts of Bihar and humanity demands that those who have been the victims of this maddening frenzy should be helped in every possible way.

The rumours that are current and some of the press reports are very much exaggerated. My estimate of the total number killed in firing at different places in this affected district is about 250 so far. This is not a small number, but it was necessitated by the magnitude of the lawlessness rampant in some parts.

I know the innocent kisans of Bihar and have regard for them but they were misled by certain interested persons who tried to fish in the troubled waters.

1. Speech at a meeting of students at Patna, 8 November 1946. From the *National Herald*, 10 November 1946 and *The Searchlight*, 11 November 1946.

I am sorry that the military had to be employed in quelling the disturbances by firing. No doubt, it has agitated the minds of a section of the people. In the villages people are in a highly panicky condition. Neighbours suspect each other and live in constant dread. They have no sleep and their work suffers. Panicky condition emasculates a nation and has its effect on the coming generation. No civilized society can exist in such a state, and it is imperative, therefore, for you to tone up the morale of the people and restore confidence among them. Panic is to be allayed at all costs. Terror-stricken and hysteric people have to be consoled and taken back to their villages. It is here that the students can do their work and make themselves useful. Those who have a spirit to work should penetrate the villages in bands and help in the rehabilitation of life. I will congratulate the students if a few of them have to die in their endeavour to restore confidence. This is my message to the students at the present moment.

35. Situation in Bihar under Control

Generally speaking, the situation in Bihar is very well in hand, and no major development is expected in future.

What had happened is bad enough. The situation was bad in the three districts of Patna, Gaya and Monghyr. But it is much better now and for the last three days no major incident has been reported from anywhere in the province.

It appears that certain criminal elements, dacoits and the like, are now functioning in some areas, taking advantage of the disturbed condition, but the situation has been brought under control.

The reports that have appeared in the press sometimes are exaggerated, and have no relation to facts. It is very difficult to assess the exact number of people killed, wounded and stranded. But it can never be probably over 2,000 killed at the utmost on all counts, including military firing.

I am submitting a daily report of my study of the situation to Mahatma Gandhi. Though I am leaving for New Delhi today, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan are staying on.

1. Interview to the Associated Press of America, Patna, 9 November 1946. From *The Hindu*, 10 November 1946 and *Hindusthan Standard*, 11 November 1946.

36. Statement on the Situation in Bengal and Bihar[1]

I have accepted these short-notice questions not without hesitation, for it is no easy matter to deal with them. Any proper survey of the communal troubles in the country would be a big undertaking, hardly suited for a relatively brief answer to a question. Yet I have welcomed these questions, for it is the right of Honourable Members to inquire into matters of the most vital significance to the country, and of the House to know what the Government is doing about them. The House will realise that the subject is one which has excited passion all over the country and rightly agitated the people's minds. It is difficult to deal with it without raising controversies which embitter. It is not my purpose or desire to say anything which would add to this bitterness or raise a fresh controversy in this House.

The newspapers are full of communal troubles and riots and bloody murders and much worse. No one, certainly not the Government, desires to suppress facts. This House must be seized of the facts so that it may form proper judgment and devise remedies. The facts are bad enough, terribly bad. And yet what often appears in the newspapers is something far removed from facts and the manner of presentation is such as to inflame public passion. I trust, and I am sure the House will agree with me, that it is the duty of all of us, and more especially of the Honourable Members, to be exceedingly careful in these days of crisis and disaster, to take every care not to say or do anything which might excite the people and worsen an already bad situation. One of the worst features of the situation is the dominance of rumours which exaggerate everything and sometimes create out of nothing. The most fantastic accounts spread rapidly and are believed in. We have to suffer not only insecurity and public disorder, but something which is even worse because it feeds and nurtures that disorder. This is anarchy of the mind. It is just when crisis faces us that we have to maintain the equilibrium of our minds.

To give an account of the communal trouble in the country is to deal with a chain of events going back into the past. One evil action leads to another which again becomes the ostensible cause of further evil. The preaching and practice of hatred and violence inevitably sows seeds which yield bitter fruit. If we sow the wind we have to reap the whirlwind.

Ever since the Interim Government took charge of affairs they have been intensely occupied with these communal troubles. The House will remember that this Government took office very soon after what is called the great

1. 14 November 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VIII, 1946, 12 November 1946 - 18 November 1946, pp. 1052-1055.

Calcutta killing which began on the 16th August. All our work was shadowed by these events and we tried our utmost to deal with this situation. The House knows that the Government of India may not interfere, under the existing constitution, with provincial autonomy. In so far as anyone can interfere under the constitution, it is the Governor-General and not the Governor-General-in-Council. Nevertheless, as Indians in responsible position to whom the country looked for guidance, we tried our utmost to help. Throughout this unhappy period, whether it was in Calcutta or elsewhere in India, or Noakhali and East Bengal, or Bihar, the Government were acutely conscious of their responsibilities and keenly desirous of combating the peril that had encompassed the country. There has been much public criticism of our seeming inaction because necessarily we could not function in public in regard to these matters. If facts were known, I do not think that this criticism would be considered to be justified.

A succession of events, which are known to this House, led to the great Calcutta killing. That was followed by the great tragedy of Noakhali and East Bengal, and that again led to the terrible happenings in Bihar. And now Bihar is leading to other outbursts of brutality and violence. There appears to be a competition in murder and brutality, and unless we put a stop to this, the immediate future of our country is dark. That it can be put a stop to, I have little doubt. Not by a reliance on mere armed force, though that may be necessary occasionally, but by the efforts of all those who influence public opinion, can we put an end to this horror which comes in the way of all political and social progress, and indeed which is already making life a burden for many of us. It must be clearly accepted that we cannot settle any problem by the methods of hatred and violence.

Recently I have come into intimate contact with masses of people in Bihar and I saw the horrors that a simple and likable peasantry can perpetrate when it loses all balance and sanity. I found that during the Calcutta killing a large number of Biharis had lost their lives. Their relatives had returned to Bihar together with many other refugees and had spread out all over the rural areas carrying stories of what had happened in Calcutta. The people of Bihar were stirred profoundly. Then came news of Noakhali and East Bengal. These stories, and more especially the accounts of abduction and rape of women and forcible conversion of large numbers of people, infuriated the populace. For some time they looked to the Central Government and hoped that this would give them relief and afford protection. When they did not see any such help or protection forthcoming, they grew bitter and criticized strongly the Interim Government for its apparent inactivity.

Various incidents occurred in Bihar which added to the general excitement. Towards the end of October there was trouble in Chapra district and in Bhagalpur city. This was soon suppressed. Then came, on the 31st October, trouble on a big scale in Patna district, overflowing into Gaya and Monghyr

districts. It was in essence a mass uprising, large numbers of peasants burning and killing mercilessly. As always happens on such occasions, criminal and anti-social elements took part and even took the lead in certain areas. One of the difficulties of the situation was that the areas could not be easily reached because of lack of communications and flooded conditions.

This mass uprising lasted almost exactly one week. Just as it started suddenly, it ended almost equally suddenly. This rapid ending of a widespread movement, which was on the verge of spreading to other districts, was remarkable. The military, of course, came in at a somewhat later stage and helped in restoring order. But a much more powerful factor in this restoration of order was the effort of a large number of persons, chiefly Biharis, who spread out all over the villages and came face to face with the peasant masses. The news of Mahatma Gandhi's proposed fast also had a powerful effect.[2]

Grossly exaggerated accounts have appeared of the number of casualties during these troubles caused both by infuriated mobs and by military firing. It is difficult to give at present even approximately accurate figures of casualties. But it can be said with certainty that some of the figures appearing in newspapers are completely wrong. They are usually based on accounts of panic-stricken refugees who had lost all balance or judgment.

The Bihar situation was brought completely under control after a week and is quiet now. Evidence of a return to normality is the desire of people to return to their villages. The great problem there now is how to rehabilitate these people. The Bihar Government have undertaken responsibility to lodge, feed and provide other necessaries including medical relief to the evacuees. I understand that they also propose to give financial assistance to the sufferers in order to help rehabilitation.

As I have stated, the news from and about Noakhali created a very profound feeling in Bihar and the rest of India. I am not in a position to say much about present conditions in East Bengal. But recent reports from reliable witnesses have drawn particular attention to the vital problem of restoring women who were abducted and forcibly converted. This problem is not only important in itself but also because of its all-India repercussions. It is, therefore, urgently necessary that every possible step should be taken with all possible speed to restore them to their people. Only then can beginnings be made of rehabilitation in East Bengal.

It is clearly the duty of the State to give every possible assistance to the sufferers from these disturbances. I hope that Provincial Governments will undertake this duty in an adequate measure. This will help also in producing

2. In Bengal and Bihar the news of Mahatma Gandhi's proposed fast and the appeals of Nehru and Rajendra Prasad to save Mahatma Gandhi's life and make amends for the outrages committed improved the situation.

a feeling of security among the people and a psychological atmosphere for a return to normality.

Recent events around and near Delhi[3] must be fresh in the minds of Honourable Members. It is time that we put an end to all this sorry business all over India, and I trust that every sensitive Indian, whatever his political views might be, will cooperate with others in this vital and urgent task.

3. A communal clash took place at the Ganga fair at Garhmukteshwar in Meerut district on 6 November. Following this incident, pilgrims returning from the fair were attacked at various places. Communal clashes were also reported from Meerut city and Delhi.

37. To Feroz Khan Noon[1]

New Delhi
16th November 1946

Dear Mr. Noon,

Chaman Lal has just sent me your note[2] about Bihar. I have read it. Naturally I cannot say anything about what you actually saw and recorded, but I must say that in many respects the inferences you have drawn are at complete variance with mine. I find that much of your report is based on accounts of refugees or evacuees. This evidence is of a very doubtful nature because in moments of excitement people lose all power of judgement and have a tendency to exaggerate very greatly. I tried to verify myself statements made by some evacuees and I found always that the facts were different and the account that had been given to me was greatly exaggerated. I found this both on the Muslim side and the Hindu side. I could hardly accept any statements without verification.

Some parts of your report refer to me or to matters about which I have knowledge. Naturally, you had no direct knowledge of what I did or what I said and you had to rely on hearsay. Anyway what you have said about me is not correct. For instance you refer at the bottom of page 8 and the top of page 9 about the meeting I addressed at Jethli village. Nishtar was present. It would appear from your report that what I said had a doubtful influence on the people. I think this is a very wrong inference. What I am supposed to have said is also not correct as reported to you. I have known the peasants of Bihar for a long time and I addressed them as people who in the past had functioned bravely but who had thoroughly misbehaved.

Again your report at page 2 of the conversation with the Bihar Prime Minister seems to me very odd. I was not present then of course, but I had

1. J.N Collection.
2. It was in fact Noon's private diary.

repeated talks with the Prime Minister and other Ministers as well as with the military previously. Those talks do not fit in with your report. Thus I know for a fact that on the 31st October the Prime Minister asked the military for troops to protect the rural areas and to control and disperse the mobs. The answer he got was that the situation was not bad enough for troops to be sent at that time. I know definitely that he told the troops and the police to take the strongest action against crowds or others who were committing crimes. I verified this myself by asking odd pickets and patrols and their officers. I was told that they had complete discretion in the matter and they proposed to take strong action where necessary.

My being there had nothing to do with the firing. I was not present at any firing and there was no occasion for me to tell the Ministry to change their policy because the moment I arrived there all of us had a conference with the military authorities and the Prime Minister is quite clear on the subject.

About the refugees and evacuees, they were all brought to Patna and some other centres for many days. When the number in Patna became so large that there was a danger of an epidemic, it was decided at a conference with the military authorities that Muslim refugees should be concentrated in some big villages also which should be efficiently protected. This was the proposal on behalf of the Muslim League also.

You refer at one place in the report to Jayaprakash Narayan sending 250 student volunteers and you suggest that this was done to remove corpses and otherwise cover up what had been done. As a matter of fact these student volunteers were sent at my instance to take relief, medical and other, to the rural areas.

I visited quite a number of places where you went and the impression I got after meeting the people and enquiring into the situation was very different from the impression you have got. This is perhaps natural in the circumstances as people can gather different impressions of one event. It shows, however, that we have to be very careful about coming to a judgment on odd reports of excited people.

It is for this reason that I refrained from issuing any kind of a report till I could make sure of my facts.

You have passed strong strictures on the Provincial Government. This is both a matter of fact and of inference and opinion. My own opinion is that in many respects the administration was rather lax before these events and more specially the Services were slow, but I was myself quite convinced of the *bona fides* of the Ministry and it seems to me entirely out of the question that any of them in any way countenanced the disorders. I reached Patna on the 3rd November and I know from personal knowledge that the Ministry did their very utmost to meet a difficult situation and it was largely due to their efforts and those of the military as well as of some outsiders that a very dangerous situation could be controlled so soon. The Governor, as you must

know, decided to leave Bihar after the occurrence had started and went to Bombay. He returned when the situation was quietening down.

I have referred to only a few matters contained in your report with which I am acquainted. I do not wish to say anything about other matters but I do feel that the impressions you have got, being based largely on hearsay, may be far removed from truth. During my stay there of nearly a week, almost every step that was taken was taken in consultation between the Provincial Government, the military authorities and representatives of the Muslim League. We had several conferences and there was little, if any, difference of opinion about the steps to be taken.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

38. To G.E.B. Abell[1]

New Delhi
16 November 1946

Dear Mr. Abell,
I have your letter of the 15th November in which you state that Mr. Jagat Narain Lal is believed to have been a principal instigator of the recent troubles in Bihar.[2] This is a very serious charge and requires evidence. The only evidence you have mentioned is that he organised the Noakhali Day meeting at Patna. I do not know if the Governor of Bihar considers it an offence to have organised Noakhali Day meetings. Hundreds of such meetings took place all over India as nothing has excited and infuriated the people so much as the recent happenings in Noakhali. I should be glad to know if the Governor has any other evidence in his possession which has induced him to make this charge.

You refer further to some statement made by Mr. Jagat Narain Lal, which has appeared in the *Indian Nation*[3]; in which he is said to have made allegations against the military. I have not seen this statement, and if he has made it I am sorry for it because no one should make a general statement of this kind without sufficient proof that such occurrences were fairly widespread. As a matter of fact large numbers of villagers and others made similar statements to me in Bihar. After personal inquiry I found there were a few cases of loot and a number of old women inside their houses had been shot

1. J.N. Collection.
2. The letter added that the Governor had suggested to the Prime Minister that action should be taken against Jagat Narain Lal, but the Prime Minister was not prepared to do anything beyond censorship of press messages. It was suggested that Nehru should ask the Premier of Bihar to deal more firmly with Jagat Narain Lal.
3. Abell's letter said that the *Indian Nation* of 13 November published allegations by Jagat Narain Lal of loot and murder by troops.

dead. It was extremely probable that some soldiers had misbehaved. But I could not blame the military as a whole for the misdeeds of the few.

While I was in Bihar some persons complained to me about Mr. Jagat Narain Lal. I took the trouble to inquire into this and tried hard to get some evidence. Not a scrap of evidence was produced except the fact that Mr. Jagat Narain Lal had been greatly excited by reports from Noakhali and spoken strongly about them. During my stay in Bihar I found that Mr. Jagat Narain Lal was working hard to put down the disorders. Many people who disagreed with his general viewpoint spoke to me of the good work he was doing.

I think it should be realized that events in Noakhali and East Bengal have produced a most powerful reaction on large numbers of people because little has been done yet to get back the abducted women in East Bengal. This reaction continues.

I really do not know what I can do in these circumstances. I cannot certainly suggest to the Prime Minister to take action against Mr. Jagat Narain Lal unless there is sufficient evidence for it, and I have found no evidence in spite of an effort to find it. If the Governor has more evidence he should supply it. If not, then he cannot expect anyone to proceed without basis.

I am sending a copy of your letter as well as a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister of Bihar.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

39. To Sri Krishna Sinha[1]

New Delhi
19 November 1946

My dear Sri Babu,

I have received a large number of letters stating that the Bihar Government had refused to indulge in firing and that it was only when I insisted upon it that this was agreed to. Some people imagine that I really took part in the firing. It is also usually stated that the casualties were very great. No doubt, you must have received many such communications, and the newspapers have also written much to this effect.

2. Feroz Khan Noon, who went to Bihar a short while ago, has said the same thing in a kind of report that he has prepared. In this he further adds that in the course of an interview with you, you agreed to his saying that you

1. J.N. Collection.

had ordered the police and the military not to fire. I have ignored these letters and complaints so far as I am concerned, but I do feel that it is unfair to your Government to ignore them. I think it would be worthwhile on your part to issue a relatively brief statement of facts regarding my going there and the firing etc.

3. It does not seem to be realised by people that there is a vast difference between my going to Noakhali and my going to Patna. I went to Patna to meet old colleagues and discuss the situation with them and I stayed on at the request of those colleagues. It was not the Central Government intervening or overruling you. I couldn't go in that capacity to Noakhali.

4. As for the firing, so far as I know, it was on a limited scale and, considering all that had happened, this firing was obviously not in excess of the situation. Indeed it erred on the other side. I was told that the total casualties would in no event exceed 250. That figure is by no means a big one considering everything.

5. If you agree with me, I suggest that a brief statement might be issued contradicting the report that the Bihar Government had refused to order firing and that I had personally ordered it. You could say that this and other reports are entirely unfounded and that your Government had asked for the military as early as 31st October and when they actually came they were given full discretion to meet the situation. As for me I stayed on there at your invitation and I did not interfere in any way with your work or decisions. As for the firing I had nothing to do with it.

6. This is just to give you some vague idea. The statement should be much better worded.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

40. The Need for Direct Approach to the Masses[1]

The happenings in Bengal and Bihar and parts of U.P., including Meerut, are not only attacks on innocent men, women and children, but attacks on the ancient culture and civilization of India. The people should resist such

1. Extracts from the reply to the civic address, Meerut, 24 November 1946. From *The Hindu*, 25 November 1946.

cowardly onslaughts with all the force at their command, or else the country's proud heritage will be wiped out. It is true that the military and police have succeeded to a certain degree in quelling such occurrences, but, in my opinion, the right way to deal with communal disorders is penetration into the interior of the country by responsible public men carrying with them the message of peace, love and goodwill.

I concede that the perpetrators of the crimes had been swayed by the prevalent communal passions. They are good and simple village folk and conscious of the futility of such happenings. We tried this method of direct approach in Bihar and we were able to control the situation. I say, if you make a sincere and honest effort, you are bound to succeed. Even if you have to sacrifice your lives in this noble cause, it will be worth doing so.

41. To Sri Krishna Sinha[1]

New Delhi
29th November 1946

My dear Sri Babu,

I have your letter of the 23rd November.[2] About Nagarnausa, you know that I visited the place and personally conducted an enquiry.[3] I have no doubt that some excesses were committed by some soldiers, that there was looting and that, possibly, they shot some people in their houses. Nevertheless, I think that the agitation about Nagarnausa has no great foundation. One must see this thing in its proper context. I spoke about this in some detail at the Congress session. There were twenty-five soldiers of the Madras regiment under an English officer trying to guard twelve hundred refugee Muslims and there was undoubtedly a big hostile crowd which they had to face. In these circumstances, it is no good thinking in terms of the parlour and the study. I am not prepared to say that as a result the soldiers committed atrocities, though undoubtedly a few amongst them may have done so. One must remember that twenty-five soldiers trying to protect twelve hundred persons against a hostile crowd are in a very precarious position. They have to take risks and they have to fire often enough when they think that they might be attacked.

The report that Jagat Babu has sent contains some important facts which in the main must be true. Still, excited people are not good witnesses and I found many discrepancies in the different accounts that were given to me.

1. File No. 399-PS/46-PMS.
2. Sinha wrote that since Nehru left Patna there had been a great agitation about the firing at Nagarnausa. He also enclosed a report from Jagat Narain Lal who had gone there to conduct an enquiry.
3. See *ante*, item 33.

In any event, I do not think that this is a matter that is important enough to be referred to General Bucher for further information. You have yourself written to him about it; that is enough. I should not pursue the matter further.

Yours sincerely,
J. Nehru

42. To H.S. Suhrawardy[1]

Srirampu
Dec. 29, 4

Dear Mr. Suhrawardy,
During my very brief visit here to see Gandhiji, he has been good enough to show me the file containing his correspondence with you. I have glanced through this rather hurriedly. For the first time I have seen the report of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League on the Bihar tragedy and their resolution thereon. I had no knowledge of this previously, perhaps because I was away in England when this was issued.

As my name has been mentioned in the course of the correspondence, I think I owe it to you and myself to state what I know about Bihar. In the circumstances I have to write briefly and I cannot deal with the innumerable points raised in the report and the resolution of the Bihar Muslim League.

As you know, I went to Bihar from Calcutta with Sardar Patel, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan and Mr. Nishtar. I had no idea then of the seriousness of the situation there. On arrival we met the ministers, various officials, some military officers and a number of prominent members of the Muslim League. We discussed the situation and the measures to be taken and, realising that the situation was very serious, I decided to stay. Mr. Nishtar also decided to stay. He went away to Delhi after two or three days and returned later. I stayed on for seven or eight days continuously.

During this period I was intensively occupied in touring, visiting numerous places in the affected areas, addressing large gatherings, and in conferences with the ministers, officials, the military and Muslim League members. After five days it appeared to me that the trouble had ended or had been controlled. For a day or two there were no reports of any serious occurrences and there was general agreement that there was no great chance of anything untoward happening. The enormous problem of rehabilitation of course remained and we discussed this at length. It was then that I returned to Delhi.

During my stay in Patna I sent frequent reports to Gandhiji of what I had seen or done. After my return to Delhi I had no first-hand knowledge and ceased to write to him about Bihar. Indeed I have hardly written to him

1. Pyarelal Papers.

during this period owing to pressure of other work. I have however tried to follow what was happening in Bihar both from private and official sources. We have been receiving almost daily reports from the Governor and the military.

The impression I have gathered has been that while the problem of rehabilitation was necessarily a vast and difficult one, the problem of peace and order had been tackled satisfactorily and no serious occurrences had been reported. The question was how to help the afflicted and return to normality. In your last letter to Gandhiji you mention a report of some Muslim refugees who had returned to their homes being murdered. This is the first time I had heard of any such instance since I left Bihar and certainly this should be investigated.

My impressions of the tragic days when I was in Bihar are deep and most distressing. I cannot compare what happened there with occurrences in Noakhali without far greater knowledge than I possess. I can only speak of what I myself saw or investigated. There is no doubt that the most cruel and brutal murders on a large scale took place in Bihar and these included women and children. Personally I did not hear anyone mention the particular cases you mention in your letters or those referred to in the report of the Bihar League. Nor did I hear anything similar to them. Innumerable reports and charges reached me, often from Muslim League members and volunteers. What I saw and heard, however, was staggering enough.

I investigated at the time many of the reports made to me by Muslim League members. I found that very often they were greatly exaggerated and sometimes quite baseless. I was not surprised at this as the atmosphere was one of high emotionalism and excitement and the reports were based on stories of refugees who were in a very abnormal state of mind.

From all the reports I received then or later from official sources I have no reason to believe that the dead exceeded 5000. That surely is terrible enough. I have of course no definite data with me and have to rely on the official and private estimates. I am quite sure that the Muslim League estimates, based usually on refugees' accounts, are grossly exaggerated.

The report of the Bihar League is an astounding document. On the face of it, it is a wholly unbalanced and tendencious account. I know for a fact that some references in it are not true, and I have strong reasons for believing that many others are likely to be untrue. I cannot go into this matter in any detail here. But I want to tell you that I am convinced that the main charges against the Bihar Government are completely without basis. Having been on the spot during the most critical days, I have some justification for forming an opinion. I might add that the charges made in the report against the Government were not made to me by Muslim League leaders at that time. Indeed many of them expressed very clearly to me their belief in the *bona fides* of the Premier and only complained of his general softness.

I think also that the Bihar Government have faced the very big job of rehabilitation bravely and on the whole efficiently. I am not acquainted with the details of what has been done or is happening. But even when I was there I found the Muslim League coming in the way of the Government's efforts to help the refugees and evacuees.[2] They did not want this help to be given directly but only through the League. This seemed to me odd as Government was in fact seeking the cooperation of the League in every way. The League in fact refused at first to allow refugees to go into the Government's camps and kept them in very insanitary conditions in the city till an outbreak of cholera forced them to change their policy. The impression I gathered was that the Bihar League was more interested in making political capital than in helping the evacuees to find suitable accommodation etc. That impression has persisted and has been strengthened by subsequent reports.

You may consider me partial. If so, I cannot help it. I am telling you how I have felt about it and I have tried to be objective.

All this of course does not lessen the horror of the tragedy that darkened Bihar for a week or more. We should certainly find out exactly what happened and hide nothing, and punish the guilty. But it does seem to me that the Bihar League's report and resolution are so wild and irresponsible in their assertions and charges that it becomes impossible to attach importance to what they say. Nor, if I may say so, can much reliance be placed on emotional accounts of refugees without the strictest cross-examination and corroboration. I have no personal knowledge of the state of affairs in Bihar now but I have met many persons who have visited the province and the impression I gathered was that the situation was rapidly returning to normal. Of course the problems, both immediate and long-term, are intricate and vast. But there appears to be no danger to life or property. Your letters to Gandhiji have for the first time suggested this to me. I shall inquire into this matter and do what I can. But I would beg of you not to give credence to every unconfirmed report that you receive.

I have written this letter in haste and it is necessarily scrappy and does not deal with many matters I have in mind. But it will give you, I hope, some idea of how I view this matter.

I am showing this letter to Gandhiji. Indeed it is at his instance that I have written it.

I am returning early tomorrow morning via Calcutta to Delhi.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. In a long statement issued on 1 December 1946 dealing with the background and details of the communal riots in Bihar, the major portion of which was censored, the Bihar Muslim League demanded "the exchange of population since it would be impossible for the Muslim minority here to live under perpetual fear and dread of mob violence."

I have seen in a letter from Gandhiji to you that he has suggested a joint impartial inquiry into the occurrences at Noakhali etc. and in Bihar. I think such an inquiry should take place in order to bring out the real facts. I hope you will agree to such a joint inquiry. If, however, you are unable to associate yourself with it, even so I propose to suggest to the Bihar Premier to have an inquiry into the Bihar tragedy.

I need hardly add that I am not writing this letter in my official capacity. It is a purely personal letter.

J. Nehru

43. On A Visit to Noakhali[1]

I came here specially to see Mahatma Gandhi and to seek his advice in regard to many matters. I have not met him for nearly two months. It is always a pleasure and inspiration to meet this young man of 77. We always feel a little younger and stouter after seeing him.

Question: What are your impressions of Noakhali?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I cannot say anything about Noakhali after a brief first visit of two days. I have felt a little overwhelmed by the lush vegetation which appears to crowd out human beings. Being more accustomed to mountains and wide spaces these surroundings are strange to me, but there is a peculiar beauty about this place with its innumerable areca-trees or palms. The problem, however, here is not of the areca-trees or palms, but of the human beings living in distress and extreme poverty and oppressed by fear. It is that problem that Mahatmaji is facing in his own way which produces deep and abiding results in the minds of men.

1. Interview to the United Press of India, Srirampur, 29 December 1946. From *The Hindu*, 1 January 1947.

44. The Position of the Congress[1]

I cannot divulge what advice Gandhiji has given us but I will apprise my colleagues in the Congress Working Committee all about my talks I had

1. Interview to the press, Calcutta, 30 December 1946. From *Hindusthan Standard*, 31 December 1946 and *The Hindu*, 1 January 1947.

with Mahatma Gandhi at Srirampur. I do not know what the A.I.C.C. will decide. All should wait and see.

The Working Committee will draw up a resolution and place it before the A.I.C.C. for its consideration. Naturally in framing its resolution the Congress Working Committee will give due consideration to the views of Gandhiji.

Question: Can you tell us the nature of your discussions with Gandhiji?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I discussed all manner of things with Gandhiji. I consulted him on matters that are before us. Gandhiji is encouraged by some of the results of the work he is doing in Noakhali. I saw Gandhiji after about two months. He is not in his normal good health and it seems to me that he is rather weaker than when I saw him last. I do not however mean that Gandhiji is ill.

Q: What will Congress do with regard to the grouping issue?

JN: Why not wait for a week and see what the All-India Congress Committee does? I do not have even the faintest idea as to how the A.I.C.C. will deal with the situation.

Q: What will happen if the Congress does not accept the British Government's statement of December 6 and if the Muslim League continues to abstain from attending the sittings of the Constituent Assembly?

JN: The question is prefaced with too many 'ifs'.

Q: As matters stand, what is the position of the Constituent Assembly? Will it go on?

JN: Our position is that we have fixed the date for the sitting of the Constituent Assembly, and the Constituent Assembly will carry on, unless, of course, there is any mishap which, I hope, will not happen.

As regards the Noakhali problem I would like to say that the refugees should go back to their homes. I do not want people to be cowards.

Q: Is the situation normal in Noakhali? Is it safe to go there?

JN: There is too much talk about safety in this country. People should go into a raging fire, if necessary. Life is not safe anywhere. There is a risk of being run over by a bus in the street. I have asked the refugees to go back to their villages as the situation is gradually returning to normal.

Q: Were you hit by a stone while addressing a wayside crowd at Chaumuhani?[2]

JN: Yes, it is true that I was hit by a stone at Chaumuhani. But it is a very small affair and pressmen should not make much of it. Moreover, I was not aimed at. After all it was a small stone.

2. Nehru was hit on the chin by a brick hurled by an unknown person while he was addressing a crowd at Chaumuhani on 27 December 1946 at night on his way to Srirampur.

45. The Need for Disciplined Service[1]

Disciplined service is very important for the advancement of the cause of the country.

Do you remember the pledge which I administered to you, namely, that you pledge your disciplined service above self for the suffering humanity whenever and wherever called upon to do so? I think that you had taken the pledge realising fully its implications. It is a great pledge. If you can act up to that, all your internal quarrels will cease.

In the present situation there are conflicts. On the one hand, we are struggling for independence, on the other, there are also internal conflicts. Internal conflicts are really unfortunate but they do arise in the course of a struggle for Swaraj. A country can advance only if there are people who can act and act constructively

Swaraj will come; undoubtedly, British rule will end. But the point is how we shall manage and run the affairs of our country after the attainment of Swaraj. How many people are there among us who will come forward with a spirit of service to work for the people in general? What matters most and what is essential is a spirit of service and disciplined service.

The progress of a country depends on the number of men and women it can produce for disciplined service. A country can advance only by service and action. Speeches and resolutions will not take us very far. What the Corps is doing is an example of disciplined service and this kind of constructive work alone will lead to the progress of the country.

1. Address to the cadets of the Relief and Welfare Ambulance Corps, Calcutta, 30 December 1946. From *Hindusthan Standard*, 31 December 1946.

The need for such work is the greatest in Bengal where people are economically down and require lifting up. I hope that the Corps would be able to set up an example in the matter of bringing about unity among people through selfless service.

46. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

New Delhi
1 January 1947

My dear Bapu,

I enclose copy of a letter I am sending to Suhrawardy.

I might add that there were probably a few cases of rape and abduction. The number must be small. The nature of the upheaval was such that this did not fit in with it and the whole thing lasted only a few days.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. Pyarelal Papers.

47. To H.S. Suhrawardy[1]

New Delhi
1 January 1947

Dear Mr. Suhrawardy,

I wrote to you a rather hurried letter from Srirampur on the 29th December. This was sent to you in Calcutta on the 30th.

2. In Calcutta I met General Bucher and enquired from him about the situation in Bihar from the military point of view. He told me that there had been no incident of any importance whatever during the last six weeks and that the situation was returning to normality.

3. I broke journey at Patna and met some of the Ministers (the Premier was not there) as well as Mr. Houlton,[2] the Relief Commissioner, and

1. Pyarelal Papers.
2. John Wardle Houlton (1892-1973); joined the Indian Civil Service, 1920; served in Bihar and Orissa as Assistant Magistrate and Collector; officiating Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Bihar and Orissa, April 1933; officiating Chief Secretary to Government, Bihar, April 1944; Adviser to Governor, March 1945; Relief Commissioner, April 1946; retired 1948.

Mr. T.P. Singh,[3] the Assistant Relief Commissioner. I discussed the situation with them and more specially the points raised in your letters to Mahatma Gandhi and in the Bihar League's report. They were all agreed that there was no foundation for the specific points mentioned by you and that the report was, to say the least of it, grossly exaggerated. Some described it in much stronger language and said that there was hardly any truth in it.

4. I also told them about the Atri incident mentioned in your letter. I found that no one had heard of it. Indeed I was definitely informed that no incident even faintly resembling that had happened ever since the second week of November, about the time I returned from Patna. There was some agrarian trouble about the 16th November in Hathiaunda, Saharsa District.[4] This was something entirely different from the communal troubles which had taken place previously, though it took a certain communal aspect. It appears that two Hindu boys were killed and thereupon a mob attacked some Muslims of whom 35 were killed.

5. Another incident took place a few days ago at Masani. No Muslims were involved in this. The police were searching a number of houses. This irritated people there and a crowd of Hindus attacked the police who fired upon them.

6. Apart from these two incidents nothing of note has happened during the last seven weeks in Bihar and in every way, except one, the situation has been returning rapidly to normality. This one exception relates to the exodus of people from Bihar to Bengal. The curious part of this exodus is that much of it has taken place in December, i.e., about a month after the end of the disturbances. Further it has taken place from areas where there had been no trouble whatever as in Shahabad District. In Chapra the exodus started round about the 10th December although Chapra had been completely calm for at least six weeks previously. There was no question of the situation deteriorating. In fact it had considerably improved. Yet Muslim League volunteers went about asking and influencing people to leave their homes and generally creating a psychology of fear. This has been done and is being

3. Tribhuvan Prasad Singh (1913-1975); joined the I.C.S., 1937; was posted to Bihar; held assignments mostly on the developmental side; served in the Central Government, 1963-72.

4. On 17 November 1946, a land dispute, in which one person was killed, took a communal turn in Hathiaunda village in the sub-district of Saharsa, near Biharganj railway station. The village was attacked by a mob resulting in the death of 7 persons and the burning of about 10 houses. On 18 November, the mob attacked again and cases of arson occurred. The police had to open fire.

done on a fairly widespread and organized basis, with what object I do not know as it can do no good to anyone concerned. There is no question whatever of any risk to these people many of whom actually remained in their villages throughout the disturbances.

7. Houlton, the Relief Commissioner, told me that this was one of the main difficulties he had to face and but for this the situation would be normal. There was no reason, he said, why anyone should go away as the situation was quiet and there was no apprehension of further trouble. Indeed the peasantry were in a greatly chastened mood and often full of remorse for what they had done.

8. Houlton expressed his surprise at the Muslim League report which apparently had been prepared with no attempt at verification.

9. About the number of deaths according to present information available, the figures are supposed to be between 4,300 and 4,700, in any event under 5,000. Patna District was the most heavily affected and far the greatest number of deaths took place there. Some attempt has been made to collect accurate figures for this District and to check them. The Assistant Relief Commissioner stated that the figure thus obtained after checking was 2,700 for Patna District. It was added, however, that after fuller inquiry the figure may have to be increased somewhat. Every one was, however, agreed that the number of deaths in the whole province was under 5,000. They had found that very often refugees had been included among those dead and had thus gone to swell the figures of the dead.

10. The allegations of deaths and ill-treatment in hospitals were stoutly and indignantly denied. It was stated that the hospitals achieved remarkable success considering the number of serious cases that they received and the doctors were of opinion that everything possible had been done. Lavish use was made of the latest drugs and there were indeed very few deaths.

11. The figures for refugees at present are roughly 40,000 in Bihar and probably a like number in Bengal. The highest figure for refugees was 110,000. Many of these returned to their homes. Many who had not left their homes previously have now left them at the instigation of the Muslim League volunteers.

12. The complaint that there is a ban on volunteers was said to be completely without foundation. There is no ban on volunteers and a very large number of Muslim League volunteers are present in the province and they are deliberately coming in the way of a return to normality. There have been

complaints about their behaviour. In Patna District the Government camps have actually been put in charge of Muslim League volunteers. In Monghyr volunteers were regulated as an excess of them created some confusion.

13. You mentioned in your letter that Khwaja Nazimuddin was not permitted to go somewhere.[5] It appears this had nothing to do with the Provincial Government. A military sentry stopped him because he did not have the necessary pass. Even Houlton, the Relief Commissioner, was stopped by the military sentries as he had forgotten his pass. This matter has been put right since. It was well known that passes were required and only a few days before Mr. Feroz Khan Noon had gone with a pass. These are military regulations with which the Provincial Government has nothing to do.

14. I might add that even now the Government camps in Patna are largely run by Muslim League volunteers who have sometimes not allowed Government agents to go inside the camps. You will realize that it is an odd situation for the Government to organize a camp, to pay for all expenses and then to have its own representatives treated in this manner by outside volunteers.

15. A census has been taken of the total number of houses destroyed or damaged. Including those which have been slightly damaged, the number of huts or houses comes to 3,700. About 50 of them are only partly damaged. All these are mostly huts.

16. The complaints about the food in camps, I was told, had no foundation. The food was in fact on the whole of a high standard and independent observers have said as much. The Relief Commissioner told me that arrangements about food and other matters were generally good.

17. There was no question of the ration being cut off. In Monghyr it was stated once that refugees should return to their nearby houses which were intact and if they did not return the ration might be cut off. As a matter of fact it was not cut off. Even when people went back to their villages these rations continued to be given to them.

18. Every effort is being made to start rebuilding houses. Orders have been placed for very large quantities of building materials It is hoped that these materials will begin arriving within a fortnight.

19. It is proposed also to improve communications. Roads are being thus improved to make the interior easily accessible.

5. Khwaja Nazimuddin, the Bengal Muslim League leader, was reportedly stopped at the gate of one of the two refugee camps in Monghyr district in Bihar on 12 December 1946, as he did not possess an entry pass.

20. The refugees in camps, even though they do not return to their villages, are given every facility to go and cut their crops and return to their camps.

21. The Provincial Government want the military to remain for some time longer, chiefly in order to help in the rehabilitation schemes and in cutting the crops. General Bucher, however, told me that he would like them withdrawn as there was no need for them.

22. I was told that there was still some nervousness among the Muslim population, chiefly caused by the propaganda of the Muslim League volunteers. This nervousness, Houlton and others assured me, was quite unwarranted and that there was no fear of fresh incidents. The peasantry, who had misbehaved, were genuinely sorry. The outbreak was a mass peasant upheaval, and such upheavals are not followed by sporadic incidents later on.

23. These are some of the facts I gathered from my conference at Patna. You will notice that the picture they present is completely different from that contained in your letters to Gandhiji.

24. The Bihar Ministers told me that they were anxious to have an inquiry. It was the Governor who had discountenanced the idea, but they would press for it. They welcomed Gandhiji's suggestion that there should be a joint inquiry into the occurrences in East Bengal and Bihar. Such an inquiry should not be superficial but nevertheless should be of a more or less summary character. If you agree to this there should be no difficulty. If, however, you feel that you cannot join such an inquiry, even then they would like to proceed with their own inquiry.

25. There are one or two other matters I should like to mention. There is a mention of Jayaprakash Narayan in the Bihar League's report.[6] This in itself shows how completely wide of the mark the Bihar League is. One may or may not agree with Jayaprakash Narayan about his politics, but it is just fantastic nonsense to refer to him in the manner the Bihar League report has done. He is a confirmed socialist and is as far removed from a communalist as any one can be. He was away from Bihar for some time previous to the disturbances and only returned when I was there. He did extraordinarily good work. This instance as well as many others show how unbalanced a document the Bihar League's report is.

26. I happen to know the Bihar peasantry fairly well and have some influence with them. I am quite clear in my mind that the extreme rapidity with which

6. The Bihar Muslim League report charged Jayaprakash Narayan with inciting Hindus against the Muslims.

the Bihar trouble subsided was due not so much to the presence of the military and the police, though that helped, but to the intensive and widespread propaganda conducted by many of us as well as by the Government. I left Patna when I felt sure that the trouble had ended. The aftermath, of course, remains and it is up to us to deal with that effectively. But unfortunately the activities of the Muslim League in Bihar are bent on keeping alive the nervous tension and an atmosphere of fear.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

48. To Syed Akbar Imam[1]

New Delhi
8 January 1947

My dear Akbar Imam,[2]
Your letter of the 1st January has just reached me. For many days I have not had time even to read my letters much less to reply to them. But it so happened that I opened your letter and I am replying to it immediately. There are many reasons why I am doing so; first the content of your letter and secondly because your grandfather was a good friend of mine and thirdly a minor reason—you are at my old college and are President of the Cambridge Majlis.

I appreciate what you have written. I cannot write anything at length in reply. I agree that the general line of approach should be what you have indicated; but it is not an easy matter to do exactly what one wants to do when there are so many forces at play. We never had a clean slate to write upon. But I think that things are moving in the direction you indicate. There is no question of my being silent.

What happened in Bihar was terribly bad. And yet many of the accounts that have appeared are grossly exaggerated. Unfortunately we are passing through a very bad phase all over India, and we have had eruptions in Calcutta, in East Bengal, in Bihar, in the U.P., and other places. Even as I write the situation in some parts of the Frontier Province is bad. Yet I think we shall get over this because there is a vital energy in the nation which cannot be suppressed or ultimately diverted.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. After graduating from Trinity College, Cambridge, Akbar Imam practised law at Patna and died young.

49. To Inayatullah Khan[1]

New Delhi
12th January 1947

Dear Allama Mashriqi,

Thank for your letter of the 9th January which was handed to me by your representatives. I have discussed the matter with them and given them my reactions on the various points raised.

I do not know the exact position in regard to some matters as these relate to the Home Department. But so far as I know the Government of India are not at present concerned with any bans or other restrictions on the Khaksar organisation. These are entirely provincial matters and the present Government of India, unlike the previous one, does not interfere in provincial matters. Your chief grievance appears to be against the Punjab Government. Many things have happened in the Punjab which we have not liked but we do not think it proper to interfere. Nor is it constitutionally possible to do so.

There is a definite distinction between the old Government of India and their treatment of the provinces and the present Government of India.

I do not see how any question arises now about the Government of India issuing any kind of a press communique in regard to Khaksars. The old position is ended and now each provincial administration can take such action as it desires including the issue of any fresh statement.

As regards your pension, this is either a matter for the Provincial Government or for the Finance Department of the Government of India.

So far as the family allowance is concerned, I am not aware of any rule or law relating to family allowances for people who are sent to prison or are detained. In a very few cases certain compassionate allowances were given. I do not see how the question could be considered now in regard to a past occurrence.

I do not know anything about properties which were confiscated. This matter should be taken up with the local administration in question.

As regards the newspaper you wish to start, the main difficulty is one of newsprint which is very scarce at present. So far as I know no special permission is necessary. As for the newsprint application can be made to the department concerned. This will depend upon the newsprint available for distribution.

So far as I am concerned I do not wish any special restrictions to be placed on the Khaksar organisations or their peaceful activities. But you will realise that the situation in India at present is very difficult and a delicate one and many Provincial Governments as well as the Government of India have had to impose restrictions generally though not on a particular

1. J.N. Collection.

organisation. As a rule action is taken by provincial administrations. In such a matter the Government of India only deals with the areas directly under its control and these are very few.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

50. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

New Delhi
30 January 1947

Dear Bapu,
Thank you for your letter of January 26th.

About the Hindu University matter, I know very little. Radhakrishnan spoke to me about it when I paid a brief visit to Benares.[2] He mentioned Shyama Prasad's name. I did not particularly fancy it chiefly because of his communal affiliations and politics. Otherwise, of course, he was a suitable man. I told Radhakrishnan that he might make a good Pro-Vice-Chancellor and so far as I was concerned I had no objection. I did not wish to interfere in any way in the Benares University affairs which are complicated and intricate.

Later I had a visit from Raman who was very much opposed to Shyama Prasad's appointment. I told him that this was none of my concern and I did not propose to interfere. I found subsequently that my name was being used by both parties. This was annoying. I have had no further part in this affair. I understand that some U.P. Ministers supported Govind. The election has now been postponed for a year.

I am quite sure that your visit to and tour in Noakhali District has great significance and importance. It is not for me to suggest to you to go against your own inclination. You are the best judge. What I had ventured to put to you however, and would like to repeat, is that conditions all over India to some extent are very unsatisfactory. There is a certain disruptive tendency at work which affects our work in every direction. The whole Congress organization is suffering from it and we, who are in the Government, have no time at all to give to any work except the immediate problems which confront us. It is difficult to write much in a letter. But I want you to realise that there is in some ways a progressive deterioration in the situation and I

1. Pyarelal Papers.
2. The names of S.P. Mookerjee and Govind Malaviya were being considered for the post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor which had fallen vacant by the resignation of Rang Bihari Lal.

feel very unhappy about it. I would not mind so much any number of what I would call external problems however difficult they might be. But when our own approach is not quite clear and there are different viewpoints and pulls, then it becomes even more difficult to deal with any problem.

I know that we must learn to rely upon ourselves and not run to you for help on every occasion. But we have got into this bad habit and we do often feel that if you had been easier of access our difficulties would have been less.

I am worried about Bihar. I made it quite clear to some of the Ministers there that they must ask for a Commission of Inquiry or appoint it themselves even if the Bengal Government got out of it. I thought they had agreed, but nothing has been done since. I do not know the reason for this, and I am writing to Sri Babu about it.

I have a feeling, for which I have no proof whatever, that there is no strong desire for an inquiry. The Bihar Government anyhow moves slowly. The Government has done a great deal in giving relief and yet it has not done it in the right way and hence the psychological results achieved have not been great. There is a sense of fear and apprehension among the Muslim population. Badshah Khan passed through Delhi the other day and I met him. I did not have time to talk to him about Bihar, but I understand that he is not at all happy at what he found there.

I have found both in Bihar and elsewhere very little regret or remorse among the Hindus for what happened there. There is a feeling almost of justification. Among the Muslims there is definitely a fear, whether justified or not, that there might be further attacks on them.

In Hazara in the N.W.F.P. some horrible things were done, though, of course, in point of extent and numbers there is no comparison whatever with Bihar. In quality or lack of it there is little to choose, in my mind, between Noakhali, Bihar, Meerut District and Hazara. They all represent utter degradation and depravity.

You know that there is going to be an Inter-Asian Relations Conference in the last week of March in Delhi. This Conference has assumed an unusual importance and it is going to be very representative indeed. Almost every country of Asia from the west to the east and south, including the Arab countries, Tibet, Mongolia and the countries of South-East Asia as well as the Asian Republics of the Soviet Union, will be represented by leading men. This is going to be a unique event in history. Because of this, various European and American Governments are taking a great interest in this and are even rather apprehensive because they fear the development of an Asian bloc. There is no such idea in our minds, but undoubtedly we want the countries of Asia to cooperate with each other.

I do not usually trouble you about attending any function. I do feel, however, that your presence at this Inter-Asian Relations Conference would be valuable and greatly appreciated by the people who come here from

abroad. If it is at all possible for you to be here then, I hope you will come. The Conference begins on March 23rd and is likely to last from ten days to a fortnight.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

51. To Sri Krishna Sinha[1]

New Delhi
31 January 1947

My dear Sri Babu,

I have received a letter from Gandhiji in which he says: "There seems to be no announcement yet by the Bihar Government of the appointment of a Commission. I am quite clear that the sooner it is done the better it would be all round".

I do not know how this matter stands. I conveyed Gandhiji's message to Anugraha Babu and others who met me in Patna when I was coming back from Noakhali. Subsequently I think I mentioned it to you also. I think that the Bihar Government should make it perfectly clear that they want a Commission of Inquiry into the happenings in November last. I hope you will write to Gandhiji on this subject.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

3

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM

1. The Talks in London

1. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

I discussed the matter with Nehru today. He thought Congress could not give way in advance on the issue of the sections deciding their own procedure and voting by counting heads and not by provinces. He thought the commitment by the Congress to Assam stood in the way. But I hear from other sources that the Congress may agree on this, which may be the crucial issue in deciding Jinnah to re-accept the statement of May 16th.

2. Nehru said there would be no difficulty about two other points that Jinnah may bring up: (1) that the decision of the Federal Court on what is a major communal issue should be binding on the Chairman and (2) that the Union Constituent Assembly should not interfere with or amend the group and provincial constitutions except to prevent overlapping with the legitimate sphere of the Union.

3. Nehru gave me the impression however that the Congress would much prefer to carry on by themselves at present and consolidate their position in the government and Constituent Assembly before dealing with the League. I told him this was no good and that we must make another determined effort to get the League in. He said he could not object to my sending for Jinnah which I have done.

1. New Delhi, 11 September 1946. Wavell's telegram to Pethick-Lawrence, 12 September 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 491-492.

2. To Ambikagiri Raychaudhury[1]

New Delhi
17th September '46

Dear friend,
I have your telegram.[2] I do not think there is any necessity for Assam to be

1. File No. 53-PS/46-PMS. Ambikagiri Raychaudhury was at this time general secretary, Assam Jotiya Mahasabha.
2. Raychaudhury, Upendranath Novis, M.L.A., and Harendranath Barua, Chairman, Gauhati Municipality, had expressed concern at Nehru's "announcement that Congress is prepared to sit in sections and decide question of formation of groups there." They asserted that Assam was opposed to joining sections even for purposes other than the consideration of groups, and the Assam Legislative Assembly had given a clear verdict on this question.

perturbed by my broadcast.[3] There appears to be some confusion between 'section' and 'group'. At no time have we refused to go into a section to discuss matters. But the question of forming groups is another matter and it is for the province to agree or not to agree. The resolution passed by the Assam Assembly was not happily worded and I wrote at that time to Mr. Bardoloi about it.[4]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *post*, section 9, item 3.
4. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 267.

3. To Gopinath Bardoloi[1]

New Delhi
23 September 1946

My dear Bardoloi,
I have your letter of the 12th September. I fully appreciate the feeling in Assam in regard to the sections or grouping[2] and I think that our position will safeguard your sentiment completely. Having accepted the document of May 16[3] we have inevitably to accept going into the sections, but the question is as to how we shall function in these sections. You are right in saying that I did not go into this matter in my broadcast, because I did not wish to raise controversial issues there. But our position is clear that provincial autonomy must be maintained[4] and a province must decide both about grouping and its own constitution.

It is true that we have accepted the Federal Court's decision in regard to the interpretation and we must abide by that decision of ours. But in no event are we going to agree to a province like Assam being forced against its will to do anything.

1. *Hindusthan Standard*, 1 October 1946.
2. In a memorandum to the Congress Working Committee on 21 May 1946, Gopinath Bardoloi, Prime Minister of Assam, opposed the grouping of Assam and Bengal.
3. On 10 August 1946, the Congress Working Committee resolved that, while it did not approve all the proposals contained in the Cabinet Mission's statement, it accepted the scheme in its entirety.
4. In a letter to Wavell dated 14 June 1946, Nehru, as Congress President, maintained that any interpretation of the grouping clause other than that of the Congress would endanger the basic principle of provincial autonomy.

The Constituent Assembly has now been postponed to December[5] and we do not know what developments might take place by that time. Whatever they might be, if Assam is strong enough nothing can happen to Assam that it does not like.[6]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. On 16 September 1946, it was announced that the Constituent Assembly, originally scheduled for early September, would meet on 9 December 1946. The Muslim League's boycott and the communal riots in Bihar were responsible for the delay.
6. According to the grouping plan, Assam was allotted only 10 seats in a house of 70 for framing a constitution for the group government of Assam and Bengal.

4. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
26th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
With reference to our conversation today, in the course of which you conveyed H.M.G.'s invitation to some of us to visit London[2] this week, I have consulted my colleagues and we have given careful thought to the proposal. I need hardly say that we are grateful to H.M.G. for their invitation, but we feel we cannot, at this stage, go to London. We would be agreeable to consultations with the representatives of the British Government in India.

It would appear that the proposal involves a reopening and a reconsideration of the various decisions arrived at since the visit of the British Cabinet Delegation to India. The Muslim League accepted places in the Government on the very clear understanding that they also accepted the long-term proposals contained in the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16. Indeed they could not join the Government otherwise. But now the League have announced very definitely that they will not participate in the Constituent Assembly. We attach, as you are aware, great importance to the holding of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed, namely, December 9. The invitation to us to go to London appears to us to reopen the whole

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 184-185.
2. On 26 November 1946, the British Cabinet invited Wavell and five members of the Interim Government, two representing the Congress, two the Muslim League and one Sikh, to a meeting in London to resolve the grouping clause controversy and enable the Muslim League to participate in the Constituent Assembly.

problem which was settled to a large extent by the Cabinet Mission's statement and the formation of the Interim Government. Any impression in the public mind that these decisions are reopened would, in our opinion, be fatal. It was because we felt that it was necessary in the public interest to emphasise that problems have been finally settled that we insisted on the holding of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed for it. Even this date, it must be remembered, was five months after the election of the members.[3] Any further postponement in the present context would, in all probability, result in the abandonment of the plan and create a feeling of uncertainty all round which is not only undesirable but actually, at the present juncture, would encourage various forms of violent propaganda.

It is difficult enough at this stage for us to leave the country even for a short while. We have also to prepare for the Constituent Assembly meeting which will take place in less than two weeks. If any useful purpose would have been served by our going out now, we should have done so in spite of these difficulties. We are convinced, however, that our leaving India now would mean that at the instance of the League the Cabinet Mission's plan is going to be abandoned or substantially varied and that we are parties to it. It would mean giving in to the League's intransigence and incitement to violence and this would have disastrous consequences. The first thing to be certain about is that plans agreed to will be implemented and that there will be a continuity about policy. There has been suspicion enough. Any addition to it will wreck the whole scheme and make it difficult to replace it by another. We feel, therefore, that we cannot, at this stage, proceed to London, but we would welcome, whenever necessary, consultations with the representatives of the British Government in India. A brief visit now on our part to England cannot bear fruit. It is likely to have a contrary result. We, therefore, regret we are unable to accept H.M.G.'s invitation conveyed to us through you. I trust you will convey the contents of this letter to H.M.G.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. The elections to the Constituent Assembly were completed in July 1946.

5. To G.E.B. Abell[1]

New Delhi
28th November 1946

Dear Mr. Abell,

Thank you for sending me copy of a telegram from the Secretary of State

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, p. 200.

conveying a personal message from the Prime Minister to me.[2] In reply to this I am enclosing a message for the Prime Minister. Could you kindly have it sent to him immediately?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Attlee's message of 27 November 1946 read:
"I very much hope that you will agree to come to London since it is not possible at the present time for me, or my colleagues who have already been absent more than 3 months on Indian affairs this year, to go to India. The object of our talks would be to try and ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on December 9th. There is no intention of abandoning either the decisions of the Assembly to meet or the Plan put forward by the Cabinet Delegation. It is our desire to see that this is implemented in the full and not any desire to abandon or alter it that has prompted us to ask you and your colleagues to come to London. All three members of the Cabinet Delegation individually and collectively have asked me to urge upon you the supreme importance of this opportunity of our meeting and discussing the situation before any further untoward actions take place in India.
We ask you to help in this way to make rapid and smooth progress towards the goal of Indian freedom an objective which we share wholeheartedly with the people of India."

6. Telegram to C.R. Attlee[1]

28 November 1946

I am grateful to you for your message[2] and appreciate your desire to ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on December ninth and onwards. We are all anxious that the Constituent Assembly should meet on the date fixed and should proceed harmoniously to fulfil its task and we shall do our utmost to this and in cooperation with others. As we have repeatedly stated we accept the Cabinet Delegation's plan in its entirety. In regard to certain interpretation we made our position perfectly clear to the Delegation and we have proceeded accordingly since then. We have further stated that in the event of different interpretations the matter should be referred to the Federal Court and we shall abide by Court's decision. It appears from the statements made on behalf of British Government in Parliament yesterday

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 200-201.
2. See *ante*, item 5, fn. 2.

that only point to be considered is this interpretation.[3] In regard to this our position is quite clear and we are completely committed to it. We are unable to change it and have no authority to do so. Hence our visiting London for this purpose is not necessary.

The first session of the Constituent Assembly will deal with matters of procedure and appointment of committees. The question of interpretation as regards subsequent activities will not arise at this stage. It is therefore easily possible for all to cooperate in this session and if necessity arises to refer any matters over which agreement has not been reached to Federal Court.

It would be more suitable and convenient for us to visit London if necessary after first brief session of the Constituent Assembly. This would allow more time for consultations.

In view of these considerations and also because of great difficulty in leaving India at present we feel that our visit to London now would serve no useful purpose; but if in spite of this or because you wish to consider other matters you desire us to come, we shall endeavour to do so. But we shall have to return by December 9 in time for the Constituent Assembly.[4]

3. Pethick-Lawrence stated on 27 November, "The purpose of the proposed discussions is to endeavour to reach a common understanding between the two major parties on the basis on which the work of the Assembly can proceed with the cooperation of all parties." Arthur Henderson said the same day that the British Government's policy was to stand by the Cabinet Mission's statement, but they wished to clear up all differences of interpretation.
4. Attlee replied on 28 November: "I note what you say about the position of Congress, but none the less we feel that a visit by you before the Constituent Assembly meets would be of great value and we appreciate your willingness to meet us in this matter. Arrangements will be made to enable you to return by December 9th."

7. To G.E.B. Abell[1]

New Delhi
28 November 1946

Dear Mr. Abell,

I have received your letter of today's date.[2] If the Prime Minister still desires me to visit London, I shall go there. I do not think any other Congress colleague of mine will go. Sardar Baldev Singh will probably accompany

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Abell forwarded Attlee's request that Nehru visit London to try and ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on 9 December 1946.

me. I propose to take with me Mr. Tarlok Singh[3] as secretary and Mr. M.O. Mathai, my Private Secretary. I understand that Sardar Baldev Singh does not intend to take any member of his staff with him. Mr. Tarlok Singh will function as his secretary also.

I do not mind what arrangements are made for our stay; but I should like Sardar Baldev Singh to stay in the same hotel as also the two secretaries I have mentioned above.

I would prefer to travel by the ordinary service leaving at 2 p.m. on Saturday for Karachi. This will give me a little more time. You will realise that we are being terribly rushed and unfortunately I am none too well as I have had for some days past a bad pain in my back for which I have been undergoing electric treatment.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. (b. 1913); joined I.C.S., 1937; served in Finance Department, Government of India, 1944-46; Private Secretary to Nehru, 1946-47; Additional Secretary, Planning Commission, 1958-62, and member, 1962-67; author of several books including *Poverty and Social Change* and *Towards an Integrated Society.*

8. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
28 November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

You will have seen my reply to the message of the Prime Minister. For the reasons I have mentioned in my reply, as well as other reasons, we have been most reluctant to leave India at this stage and to go to London. As a matter of fact I am not personally well enough to travel without considerable discomfort. But that is a minor matter. I felt, however, that in view of the Prime Minister's personal appeal, it would have been discourteous to give a final refusal. Because of this consideration I have pointed out to him some reasons for not going, but have finally said that I would be prepared to go if he still wants me to do so. We view this visit with considerable misgiving and this misgiving has been heightened by the fact, mentioned in Mr. Abell's

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7,* Vol. 9, pp. 201-202.

letter to me,[2] that the Muslim League representatives are taking a Public Relations Officer with them. Is this visit meant for propaganda purposes or for serious talks?

If Mr. Attlee still wants me to go, I shall go alone on behalf of the Congress. There is no particular reason why we should add to the number when important work needs our presence here. Sardar Baldev Singh will, however, probably accompany me.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. On 28 November 1946, Abell mentioned that the Muslim League members wished to take Altaf Hussain, a Public Relations Officer, to London. But Wavell, the next day, informed Nehru that Liaquat Ali Khan "has agreed not to take Mr. Altaf Hussain."

9. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
29th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

There is a great deal of doubt and misapprehension in the public mind about the proposed visit of some of us to London. I think it would be desirable for us to issue some kind of statement. We shall have to consider this. In any event, I think, we should publish the correspondence on this subject. This would include my letter to you, dated the 26th November, the Prime Minister's telegram, dated the 27th November, my telegram to him, dated the 28th November, and his reply, dated the 28th November. I hope there is no objection to this publication.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. R/3/1/127, I.O.L.R., London. Not printed in *The Transfer of Power*.

10. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
29th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I wrote to you today about the desirability of our issuing a statement and publishing the recent correspondence relating to our going to London. I have just been informed that the Prime Minister has been asked if he has any objection to this publication. I have also been told that you would advise us in any event not to publish these letters and telegrams at this stage.

We shall not of course publish the correspondence till we hear from the Prime Minister and we should not like to do so against your advice. But, as I mentioned in my previous letter, there is a great deal of mystification in the public mind and a measure of consternation at developments. We are receiving enquiries by long distance telephone and otherwise from all manner of places. We have to say something. It is hardly fair to the public for us to remain silent on such a vital matter. I hope therefore that it will be possible for the Prime Minister and you to agree to this publication.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. R/3/1/127, I.O.L.R., London. Not printed in *The Transfer of Power.*

11. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
29th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of today's date. It is good of you to suggest that special arrangements might be made for me during the journey.[2] But I would hate to go anywhere in a lying down condition. An easy chair will be quite good enough.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, p. 212.
2. Wavell had written: "Will you please let my Private Secretary know what we can do to lessen any discomfort to you in the journey? I think it might be possible to arrange lying down accommodation for you."

12. On the Talks Scheduled in London[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru: There are no differences between Hindus and Muslims in India. The problem is mostly of political ideologies.

Question: Do you think that the London talks will smooth out the divergence of views between the Congress and the League?

JN: In politics there is no question of being an optimist or pessimist but of making the best one can.

1. Interview with Reuter's at Cairo, 1 December 1946. From *The Hindu*, 2 December 1946.

13. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

Malta
2 December 1946

My dear Vallabhbhai,

We are hung up here as our plane gave trouble. We are waiting for another which has been directed from Marseilles much to the annoyance of its passengers. We are now due to leave after midnight. This means reaching London all [tired][2] out.[3] As it is I am not feeling too well. Our conversations start tomorrow morning when I meet the Prime Minister.

Whatever the nature and result of our talks, I understand the Viceroy will stay on for a week or two in London. So also probably Jinnah.

When I return to India I fear I shall be a little worn out and not too fit for strenuous work for a few days.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-1950*, Vol. 3, p. 291.
2. Omission in the source.
3. They arrived in London on 3 December 1946.

14. Interviews with Lord Pethick-Lawrence and C.R. Attlee[1]

I

Pandit Nehru and I had a rather general discursive discussion. He expressed to me his regret that the plans of the Interim Government, formed when the Muslim League were not included, were not making the progress that he would like. He felt very unhappy about the communal riots but thought that they were caused in the first instance by Muslim forces both in Calcutta and in Eastern Bengal. He was aware of the likelihood of disturbances but his warnings which he had given had not been heeded. He did not consider that Mr. Jinnah had made a really strong protest against violence.[2] In fact, even though Mr. Jinnah did not advocate it, the whole policy of Mr. Jinnah was antagonism, and the Muslim League depended on protest and disagreement.

I said that there were two points to which I would like his answer. In the first place the Muslim League thought that the Congress were not really desirous of implementing the long-term plan, and really meant to bring the Muslims of India into subjection. In the second place, was there any hope of reaching a compromise solution on the question of procedure in the sections?

Pandit Nehru did not seem to have considered the timing of the discussion on sectional procedure and offered no answer when I asked whether the point would go to the Federal Court if there was no Muslim League representative present to question the interpretation of Congress. He thought it would be quite wrong for Bengal to settle the constitution for Assam or Punjab for the provinces of the North West Section. I put to him tentatively the idea that sections should form the constitution of groups and provinces but that the groups could not be actually set up until after the first election. This seemed quite a new idea to him. On the larger question of the complete distrust of the Muslim League in Congress intentions, Pandit Nehru said that though there was no personal unfriendliness between him and Mr. Jinnah he had never succeeded in getting any response from him. Jinnah had persisted in refusing any agreement about the Interim Government and had denied even that it was a coalition. He saw no hope of reconciling Mr. Jinnah and thought it would be wrong to try to appease him as a result of

1. London, 3 December 1946. The first account is in a note by Pethick-Lawrence, *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 249-250; the second account is an extract from the record of a meeting attended by Attlee, Pethick-Lawrence, Cripps and Wavell on 4 December 1946, *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 252-255.
2. On 24 October 1946, Jinnah condemned the disturbances in the country and made an appeal to both Hindus and Muslims to stop them.

violence, because that would show that violence had paid. He was against hasty decisions in the Constituent Assembly and thought that in some cases submission might be made to Provincial Legislatures. I asked him how long this would take and he said he thought about three months. I did not press him to any specific compromise but gathered that it would not have been of any value if I had done so. We had a most friendly talk but I gathered he was somewhat dis-spirited; no doubt the fatigue of the journey played some part in this.

II

The Prime Minister said that he had seen Nehru on the previous afternoon. He had had a long talk with him on general matters. Nehru had been very quiet and friendly and had stated his general position very reasonably.

...the Secretary of State had seen Pandit Nehru who had said that Congress insisted that the riots in Bengal had been organised by the Muslim League.

The Secretary of State had discussed with Pandit Nehru the procedure in the Constituent Assembly. Pandit Nehru appeared not to have considered in any detail questions of timing. He had said that it was quite wrong for Bengal votes to determine the constitution of Assam. The Secretary of State had put to him the suggestion that the group constitution should come into operation after the provincial constitution so that the option could be exercised before the group was formed. This had seemed to be a new idea to Pandit Nehru.

Nehru had said that Jinnah had refused to agree that the Interim Government was even properly described as a coalition. (H.E. the Viceroy remarked that Nehru's complaint on this subject really was that the Muslim League refused to attend meetings of all Ministers under his Chairmanship outside the Cabinet proper. The Muslims were quite entitled to do this as a Cabinet was the proper place for doing business. Nehru had twice refused to see Liaquat, when he had suggested, in order to discuss matters coming up in the Cabinet. Nehru made no use of the system of formal Cabinet Committees which was available for such purposes). The Secretary of State said that Nehru had contended that there was no hope of appeasing Jinnah because any gesture towards him merely encouraged violence in the country. Nehru was against hasty decisions being taken in the Constituent Assembly and had suggested that, after constitutions had been effectively framed, they might be put to the Provincial Legislatures.

...There was some discussion of the line to be taken with Pandit Nehru. Sir S. Cripps said that we needed to persuade Nehru to accept our interpretation of the statement. Possibly we might also say that, if the Muslims did not attend the Constituent Assembly, then we could only regard the

outcome as binding on the Hindu majority provinces and that we should have to have some other means of ascertaining the wishes of the Muslim provinces. The Secretary of State said that Nehru had said to him that Congress recognised that provinces could not be forced into a constitution against their will. Sir S. Cripps said that it would be difficult to decide whether Bengal should come under the Constituent Assembly's constitution if the Muslim League stayed away.

15. Minutes of the Conference in London[1]

The Secretary of State said that H.M.G. were anxious to help to enable India to achieve independence smoothly. They felt that the situation was not moving in that direction as it should do. The Cabinet Mission had felt that only a solution on the basis of a three-tier system of government such as they had proposed could solve the situation. That conception seemed to be losing its hold on the thought of both parties. The Cabinet Mission's judgment had been that apart from the division of India to which there were solid objections, the only hope of a solution rested on the grant of extended autonomy to the Muslim provinces on the lines proposed in the statement. The question now was whether that broad general basis was any longer sufficiently accepted to make it worthwhile to proceed upon it. Pandit Nehru said that he thought that that was the basis on which everything was proceeding. Naturally there was tension. The Viceroy said that a total of several thousand killed indicated something more than tension. Pandit Nehru said that in the last three months steps had been taken which encouraged violence. He had thought that the essence of the Cabinet Mission's proposals was that they were to be put through. Was it now suggested that the essence was that if one party objected the proposals did not go forward? The Secretary of State said that it was not H.M.G.'s policy that one party should have a veto on progress, but clearly if one major party declined to participate, that raised a very difficult situation. Pandit Nehru said that the question arose whether the whole scheme was to be put an end to. The Congress considered that they had not had a fair deal. Matters must proceed on one definite line. The position was not possible when there was constant shifting about. The Congress had been more or less pushed aside in favour of the present Interim Government in which the Muslims were not cooperating.

1. The Conference was held at the India Office at 10.30 a.m. on 4 December 1946 and was attended by Nehru, Wavell, Pethick-Lawrence, Cripps and A.V. Alexander. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 255-260.

Mr. Jinnah even said that it was not a coalition. It was a government of two differing groups. The only possible way of dealing with the situation was to lay down a policy and follow it. The feeling was growing up in India that by creating trouble something could be obtained.

Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether there had in fact been any change from the policy laid down by the Cabinet Mission. Pandit Nehru said there had been delay in the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. An Interim Government had been formed under his leadership. All further steps should have been taken through the Interim Government. But after a few weeks this position began to change. Originally he had asked Mr. Jinnah to come into the Interim Government but he had refused. He (Pandit Nehru) had felt that the Interim Government should go on without Mr. Jinnah who would come in when he understood that that would happen. Now there was a difficult position, but who had created it? There was a great urge among the masses of India for political progress. The Congress leaders had tried, with some success, to restrain that urge and keep it behind the Government. But if their attempt did not succeed he did not know what would happen. The present leaders of Congress would not be able to control it. The Muslim League was a fly in the balance compared with the vast human forces in India as a whole.

Sir Stafford Cripps asked what Pandit Nehru thought were the fundamental reasons why the Muslim League would not come into the Constituent Assembly. Pandit Nehru said that the League had never been prepared to cooperate except on a basis which was not cooperation at all. In everything they wanted a veto. The Congress wanted their cooperation because nothing could be done socially or politically if the cooperation of large groups was lacking. The Muslim League were not interested in social or political advance and lost nothing by not cooperating.

Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether Pandit Nehru thought that the Muslims could be assured that a three-tier system would eventuate out of the Constituent Assembly, that would induce them to come in. Pandit Nehru said he thought that the Muslims would come in anyhow, sooner or later, provided that they felt that the Constituent Assembly was going ahead in any case. But the Muslim League conception of coming in was to stop others from functioning. The rank and file of the Muslim League were not interested in the three-tier system and did not understand it. To them, coming into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly was a step in a conflict and not true cooperation.

The Viceroy said that there had been no conflict at Cabinet meetings of the Interim Government. Pandit Nehru said that the Muslim members refused to meet him. The Viceroy pointed out that Pandit Nehru had declined to see Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan on two occasions when he had been asked to do so, to which Pandit Nehru replied that Mr. Liaquat insulted him and

he saw no reason why he should meet him.[2] On the very first day of the Interim Government he had been insulted and almost assaulted by Muslims outside the Viceroy's House. The Interim Government could not function as two groups. If it did, the Muslim League would be outvoted, but everything could not go to Cabinet. Even recently two Muslim League representatives, with the help of the India Office, had gone to the United States and had made virulent speeches at the *New York Herald* Forum.[3]

The Minister without Portfolio[4] said that in the War Coalition in this country, Ministers did not work as party groups. The work was all done in formal sub-committees of the Cabinet in which compromises were worked out. Pandit Nehru said he did not ask the Muslim League to give up what it stood for, but there was an absence of any desire to find a way out. The League newspapers were full of irresponsible abuse of the Government in which the League was serving. Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether, in Pandit Nehru's view, it would help if some sort of guarantee of the emergence of a three-tier system were given. Pandit Nehru said that the statement of May 16th did not please the Congress, but they accepted it, partly because it was flexible and left the Constituent Assembly a fairly free field. The major limitation on its freedom was an internal one of being able to carry on with the support of enough people. The three-tier system was laid down only as something that may emerge if the provinces and people concerned want it. If they want to make a group the Congress will accept their decision completely, but they hope to convince others that there should not be groups.

Sir Stafford Cripps said that there was the point as to whether, in the section, voting should be by provinces or by majority of individuals. There was a difference between the parties on this point. Pandit Nehru said that from the outset Congress had made it clear that the only way they could reconcile the provisions of the statement of May 16th was a particular one. They had told the Mission that this was their decision. Nevertheless, they were prepared to accept the Federal Court decision as to whether they were right.

Sir Stafford Cripps said the Muslim League had come in on another interpretation which, in fact, was that intended by the Mission themselves, but it seemed to him that this dispute was rather artificial. There was no question but that the provinces had been given an option to come out of the group.

2. Volunteers of the Muslim League carrying black flags and shouting slogans staged a demonstration outside the Viceroy's House as the members of the Interim Government were being sworn in.
3. M.A.H. Ispahani and Begum Shah Nawaz. In a debate on Indian affairs, Hassan Ispahani declared: "The League's participation (in the Interim Government) means... that the struggle for Pakistan will now be carried on within as well as outside the Government."
4. A.V. Alexander.

But the principle was the provinces should see the whole picture of the group constitution before deciding whether to go in or stay out. The Mission felt that that was reasonable. On the Congress interpretation the Muslims quite rightly feel that they are deprived of the opportunity of making a complete picture of the group constitution. Pandit Nehru said that the statement suggested that provinces must form a group and subsequently come out by exercising the option. Sir Stafford Cripps said that in practice these two things must happen contemporaneously, after the provincial elections. Pandit Nehru said that the elections might be on a basis disliked by the provinces and determined by the majority in the group. The elections could be arranged in a manner which would give one side an advantage, for example, separate electorates with weightage might be prescribed. Moreover, it was possible for elections to be held in unfair conditions. In Sind, at the present time, violence was widespread and half the Government's machine was working for the Muslim League.[5] The complete picture of the group could be discussed in the sections. He did not see how a province could be compelled to go into a group.

Sir Stafford Cripps said that he saw that there was a stronger argument for province-wise voting on the provincial constitution than on the group constitution. He thought that the Muslim League felt that on the Congress interpretation a province would be able to prevent a group constitution ever being framed.

The Viceroy said that the intention of the Mission was that the sections should frame provincial constitutions. Pandit Nehru said that it was an impossible position for Congress to accept or tolerate for a moment that provincial constitutions should be framed by the majority vote of the section, which might be composed entirely of persons from other provinces. Why was a measure of compulsion introduced in this question of grouping? Sir Stafford Cripps said that that was an essential part of the compromise the Mission had evolved. He pointed out that the Muslims in the sections would be in the same position as the Congress in the Constituent Assembly as a whole. There they would need to secure the cooperation of minorities in order to get a group formed. Unless they did, the provinces would opt out. If the Muslim League were in this position they would, he thought, become less negative and more cooperative in outlook. Pandit Nehru said that he had suggested to the Secretary of State, speaking entirely on his own account, that the Constituent Assembly might proceed in a way in which tentative

5. To deal with the no-confidence motion of 5 September 1946 tabled against the Hidayatullah Ministry by the opposition, the Speaker of the Sind Assembly, Syed Miran Mohammad Shah, a member of the Muslim League, resigned, it was said, to increase the Government's voting strength to 30 in a House of 60. The Assembly was dissolved and tension prevailed between rival parties fighting the Assembly elections.

decisions as to the Union constitution would be sent to Provincial Legislatures for consideration and comment.[6] Possibly the sections might follow the same procedure. Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether Pandit Nehru contemplated that if that procedure were adopted, tentative decisions of the section would be taken by majority vote. Pandit Nehru said he would not guarantee that, but he himself would not oppose it. Generally, he thought that the more flexible the arrangement, the better. Rigidity produced opposition. He could not see why the Muslim League should not come in and put any questions of interpretation to the Federal Court. The only other test was the test of battle. Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether, if an agreement could he reached with the Muslim League which would make it clear exactly how the sections would function and would assure the Muslim League that a group constitution could be formed and a complete picture presented to the provinces before their option was exercised, that would not be a small price to pay for Muslim cooperation in the Constituent Assembly. Pandit Nehru said that the Congress could not bind the Constituent Assembly by any assurances they gave. They had discussed this subject with provinces and with the Sikhs and had had the greatest difficulty in getting them to agree that if the decision of the Federal Court went against them it would be accepted. No price was too high for real cooperation from the Muslims, provided it was real.

The Secretary of State asked at what point Pandit Nehru contemplated that this question of interpretation should be put to the Federal Court. Pandit Nehru said that he thought it would be at an early stage of the section meeting. Sir Stafford Cripps suggested that it might be put during the meeting of the Constituent Assembly as a whole. Pandit Nehru said there were no doubt a number of people in the Assembly who would be able to raise the point.

Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether Pandit Nehru would not be prepared to do away with the proposed reference to the Federal Court. Pandit Nehru said that he found that an extraordinarily difficult proposition.

The Secretary of State said that he wished to raise another subject—that of the continuance of the Interim Government in its present form. The Viceroy had made it clear to the Muslim League that the basis on which they came into the Interim Government was that the Muslim League Council would meet to reconsider the long-term plan and that membership of the Government would depend on acceptance. Congress had been informed of this and naturally took it as an assurance. If, however, the Muslim League were required to leave the Government now, that would increase

6. At a meeting with Pethick-Lawrence on 3 December 1946, Nehru had suggested that "after constitutions had been effectively framed, they might be put to the Provincial Legislatures." See *ante*, item 14.

the sense of instability which Pandit Nehru had deprecated. If there were a possibility of the Muslims attending the Constituent Assembly later it seemed to him that it would be better for them to remain in the Interim Government for the present. Pandit Nehru said that the Congress wanted the Muslim League in the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly, provided they were genuinely attempting to cooperate. They did not want to worsen the situation by sudden action. But a much greater difficulty than legal intricacies about the Constituent Assembly was the general lack of cooperation by the League to which he had already referred. Both the League and Congress were to some extent functioning in two capacities. The Congress was a revolutionary party and its left-wing were still agitators, but they were under some discipline and control. The League was in the Government but was in open opposition to it in the country. He did not see how the Congress could continue in the Interim Government with this state of affairs going on. But he did not suppose that a matter of a few days or weeks to enable the ruling of the Federal Court to be obtained would present insuperable difficulty.

16. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

London
5 December 1946

Nan dear,

As I sat down to write this letter to you the telephone rang and I learnt that I had got through to Tara at Wellesley. I have been trying to telephone to her since yesterday and I had telegraphed to you accordingly. But I couldn't get through yesterday owing to some atmospheric difficulty. I have just had six minutes talk with her. It was good to hear her voice.

2. According to your desire I am sending back Krishna Menon to New York and he will take this letter. I am myself returning to India on Saturday, 7th morning, reaching Delhi on Sunday evening at 7.30. This is going to be a quick flight lasting 30 hours from London to Delhi on a Lancaster, provided there are no mishaps. On our way here we were delayed somewhat at Malta and we spent the night at Cairo. This time there is going to be night flying—one hop to Lydda in Palestine, the next to Karachi and the third to Delhi.

3. I shall have spent just four days here, an absurdly small time for a visit to London after 8 years. I am glad I came, chiefly because it has enabled me

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

to meet a number of old friends and renew some contacts. These days have naturally been very full, partly with conferences and partly with other engagements. The result of these conferences with the British Cabinet people has not been very substantial, as was only to be expected. Nevertheless I think some little good has resulted. As I write this the conferences are not over and I do not know what kind of a decision or statement the British Government will make. One thing is certain—that the Constituent Assembly will meet in Delhi on Monday next, the 9th December; also that the Muslim League will not join it at this stage, though possibly they might do so at subsequent sessions. This will naturally depend on developments. The Constituent Assembly session may last up to a fortnight. I imagine that you will be in India by the 15th or so and can participate in this session.

4. The position of the Muslim League boils down at present to this:—they want some kind of compulsory grouping and the British Government say that to some extent the Muslim League's interpretation of their statement is justified. This means that voting in the sections must be by individual majority. Our interpretation has been that in view of provinces being free to form or not to form groups, the provinces should vote as a unit in the sections. Though a little thing, this has certain far-reaching consequences. We have further said, however, that we are prepared to accept the Federal Court's decision on this interpretation. If it decides against us, we shall accept it. Presumably a reference will be made to the Federal Court at the conclusion of the first session of the Constituent Assembly and on the Court's decision will depend whether the Muslim League comes in later or not. On this again will depend whether they continue in the Interim Government or not.

5. As I have already written to you, we have had a vast deal of trouble in the Interim Government since the coming in of the Muslim League. This is likely to continue. We shall, however, carry on for two or three weeks more till these other matters are decided and then see what can be done about it.

6. We are likely to have continual trouble in India though on a small and local scale. This habit of stabbing which the Muslim League has started and encouraged is likely to continue, but I do not myself expect any trouble on a large scale such as East Bengal or Bihar. Further I think that all talk of civil war is absurd. If the Viceroy had been clear-headed and firm, all this trouble would have ended long ago. He has been functioning in complete accordance with the Muslim League and this has encouraged their troublesome and violent activities. We have a difficult time ahead, but we shall get over it.

7. Krishna Menon gave me your letter. I have also discussed various matters relating to the U.N.O. work of our Delegation and others with Krishna Menon. Yesterday I received your cable about Asaf Ali also. What you have written and what Krishna has told me will be of considerable help to me in future. There is nothing very new about all this as I had an inkling of it myself. But I did not realise that many of our people's experience has been derived also from work in Delhi. It is a big job to change existing services quickly. We shall have to undertake it, though it must take time.

8. We hope to put an end to the Indian Civil Service as it exists at present fairly soon. That is to say a new service is going to be started completely depending upon the Government of India and not looking to the Secretary of State or the Viceroy. Existing I.C.S. men will be given the chance to retire on pension. Some of them may, of course, continue if they so desire. Generally speaking the senior British I.C.S. men and a number of others will have to go. This will not apply to Governors at present. All this clean sweep of the Civil Service will create difficulties for lack of a sufficient number of trained people to take their place, but we shall face this difficulty. But a greater difficulty will then be got over—having to work with a hostile or unsympathetic Civil Service looking for guidance and protection elsewhere.

9. I shall not discuss the various points raised in your letter as I am likely to meet you soon. Your letter, indeed, doesn't require so much discussion as action. I shall be busy enough with the Constituent Assembly on my return. When you come I shall have a talk with you and I think you might give me a confidential report.

10. The arrangement made about K.P.S. Menon going to Moscow is not very satisfactory. Nevertheless it will have to stand now. It is to be clearly understood that he is going there to discuss technical matters in regard to the establishment of our Embassy. Policy matters will have to be considered by us later. It is my desire to visit Moscow myself as early as possible. I do not know when this can be done. But if things go relatively well in India I might go to Moscow about the middle of next year or earlier.

11. As I have written to you, I want you to see Molotov[2] to convey my greetings to him and to discuss various matters of common interest to our

2. Vaycheslav Mikhailovich Molotov (b. 1890); Deputy Chairman, State Defence Committee, U.S.S.R., 1941-45; leader of the Soviet delegation to the U.N. General Assemblies, 1945-48, and to the Paris Peace Conference, 1946; Foreign Minister, 1946-49 and 1953-56; First Deputy Chairman, Council of Ministers, 1953-57; Ambassador to Mongolia, 1957-60; Chief Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, 1960-62.

countries with him. Meanwhile we have decided to send K.P.S. there so that he might discuss technical matters about the opening of our Embassy there with Soviet officials. This could be done satisfactorily on an official plane by a representative of our Foreign Department. Hence we decided to send him there at this stage following up the conversations which Krishna Menon had with Molotov. I earnestly trust that these formal arrangements will be made soon so that we can go ahead with this business. Later, as I have said, I shall try personally to visit Moscow if the Soviet Government desire such a visit. We are anxious and eager to develop close relations with the Soviet Government. Krishna Menon, on his return from America, will proceed to various European countries on behalf of the Government of India for informal talks about diplomatic representation. Certainly he should include Norway as you suggest. I have already indicated to you the reason for making these various arrangements. They are not exactly as I would like them to be, but in view of the circumstances prevailing in India, this was the best arrangement.

12. This applies also about Asaf Ali's appointment in Washington. He is a somewhat ineffective person and I had at first not agreed to his going there. I entirely agree with you on this point. But on full consideration and in view of other opinions and factors I decided to take this step. I shall try to give him an efficient understudy. For my part I should like Bajpai to continue for some time at least as the next senior man in the Embassy. Whether Bajpai agrees to this or not I do not know. I feel, as you do, that in spite of his past, Bajpai is a man of considerable ability which should be used by us, how exactly I am not quite sure. I am writing to him a few lines myself and you can tell him also that I have every wish to utilise his services for important work. All our arrangements in the near future are likely to be rather tentative. We are in a formative stage and have to be cautious.

13. The letter you sent with Anthony[3] has also reached me. I shall not write much more now as it is late and I am very tired.

With love from

Jawahar

3. Frank Anthony.

17. Interview to the Press in London[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru: Whatever happens, I will leave London tomorrow or

1. 5 December 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 6 December 1946.

on Saturday to be in time for the opening of the Constituent Assembly in New Delhi on Monday. I do not know how I am going to fit everything in.

Question: Can you tell us about your official meetings for the day?

JN: I am sorry I cannot be drawn into any discussion on these lines. Today's meetings are much too important. I have met many old friends, but my meetings with them have been very brief. There are many others whom I will not be able to see at all.

18. Minutes of the Conference in London[1]

Sir Stafford Cripps started by asking whether there was any possibility of the Congress reconsidering their attitude on the question of interpretation if there were any prospect of that leading to a clearing of the ground.

Pandit Nehru replied that the most the Congress could do was contained in their agreement to abide by a decision of the Federal Court. In reply to a further question from Sir Stafford Cripps he said that even though the nature of the decision were certain it was not possible to forego the reference.

Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether Pandit Nehru would not be prepared to take a risk in the interests of agreement, which would surely be worthwhile. Pandit Nehru said he would indeed welcome a real agreement, but he could hardly regard this as a real agreement so much as a mere step. There might be other differences. Sir Stafford Cripps suggested that means might be found for getting over such other differences. Pandit Nehru said he did not think any real agreement would be come to under present conditions, and under the threat of compulsion. Agreement would, he believed, be come to later on under different conditions. He even thought that a settlement of the present difference would be a bad rather than a good thing because it would convey the idea that violence succeeds. Thus it would lead away from, rather than to, a real agreement.

1. The conference was held at the India Office at 2.30 p.m. on 6 December 1946 and was attended by Nehru, Wavell, Pethick-Lawrence, Cripps and A.V. Alexander. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 293-294. Extracts.

The Viceroy said in his view it was in the interests of Congress as much as of anyone else to get the Muslim League in, as otherwise they would not be able to make a constitution for the whole of India.

Pandit Nehru said that any particular question such as this had to be judged in its wider context and that by yielding in one direction they might create greater difficulties in another.

Sir Stafford Cripps asked whether it would not be possible for the Constituent Assembly of its own motion to accept the situation as defined by H.M.G.'s interpretation of the disputed point. Pandit Nehru said that what he had to consider was not a mere point of interpretation but the interplay of the big forces of the country. He could not lose sight of the whole situation. Congress was being widely and generally expected, not merely by its own members but by sympathisers of various degrees, to do something which would bring about unity, and it could not prudently go against this feeling. There was the fear of doing something which would leave the situation not better but worse, as indeed had been their experience on previous occasions.

The Secretary of State asked if Pandit Nehru had considered how differences on matters of procedure, etc., that might arise in the course of the work of the Constituent Assembly might be dealt with. Had they thought, for example, of recourse to the Federal Court? Pandit Nehru said he presumed that normally disputes would be settled by the Chairman, but if need be they could be taken further, presumably to the Federal Court.

The Secretary of State asked how far Pandit Nehru thought the Constituent Assembly would go at its opening session. Pandit Nehru replied that they would set up various committees, for instance the Advisory Committee on Minorities, etc., and others of a more or less permanent nature, as well as certain more temporary committees on procedure, etc. The Advisory Committee would consist of three sections, Tribal Areas, Fundamental Rights and Minorities. If the Muslims did not come in, places could be left for them to be filled later if they did come in, or there might be some other provision for its reconstitution. But if the Constituent Assembly did not set up such committees at its opening session, it would really mean that it did not make a start at all:

Mr. Alexander asked whether it would not be possible simply to adjourn the Constituent Assembly as soon as it met, if there were some prospect in view of a settlement upon the matters of controversy. To this Pandit Nehru replied that after waiting some months for its opening session, the Constituent Assembly could hardly be expected to adjourn itself at once without doing any business, except for some very good and obvious reason....

19. Minutes of the Conference in London[1]

...The Prime Minister then read the text of the statement...[2]

After the statement had been read Mr. Jinnah asked what the position would be if the Federal Court took a different view of the interpretation of the document from that held by H.M.G. The Minister without Portfolio said that H.M.G. would then have to consider the position. Mr. Jinnah said that he must make it clear that a decision by the Federal Court would not be binding on the Muslim League. It seemed to him that the Constituent Assembly would decide by a large Hindu majority to refer the matter to the Federal Court and would be bound by the Federal Court's ruling. The Muslim League could not, therefore, be a party to such a reference as they were not prepared to be bound by it. Apart from this he was not in a position to say anything on behalf of the Muslim League but he would certainly consider the position with his Council. He thanked the British Government for doing their best to secure agreement.

Pandit Nehru said that the Congress would, of course, require time to consider the statement which had been read and he could not give any answer, though there were certain things he would wish to say.

The statement was, he considered, an amendment of the statement of May 16th and went beyond it. The Congress had proceeded on the basis of that statement throughout. The Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy would bear out his statement that Congress had from the very beginning pointed out that they discussed it on a certain basis. Subsequently they were told that

1. The Conference was held at the India Office on 6 December 1946 at 6 p.m. and was attended by Nehru, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali, Baldev Singh, Attlee (Chairman), Pethick-Lawrence, Cripps, A.V. Alexander and Wavell. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 297-300. Extracts.
2. Reaffirming the Cabinet Mission's interpretation of paragraph 19 (v) and (viii) of the statement of 16 May 1946 relating to the procedure to be followed in the sections for the framing of provincial constitutions, the statement of 6 December said that the "Cabinet Mission have throughout maintained the view that the decisions of the Sections should, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, be taken by simple majority vote of the representatives in the Sections." It declared that this "part of the Statement as so interpreted must therefore be considered an essential part of the scheme of May 16th." It also appealed to the Muslim League to agree, like the Congress, to refer any matters of interpretation to the Federal Court and accept its decisions. It agreed with the Congress stand that unless a large section of the Indian population was represented in the Constituent Assembly, His Majesty's Government could not contemplate forcing a constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country.

no amendment or change would be made. Now this elucidation took the statement a stage further. Clearly it created a new situation for the Congress. He did not know what their response would have been if this statement had been made originally.

The new statement quoted paragraphs 19(v) and 19(viii) but not paragraph 15 of the statement of May 16th. Taken together these paragraphs might bear a different interpretation from that which paragraph 19 would bear by itself.

The Prime Minister said that it was not at all clear to him on what grounds that view was advanced. Paragraph 15 dealt with fundamental principles to be embodied in the constitution. Paragraph 19 dealt with the methods of arriving at decisions about the constitution. These appeared to be quite different and separate things, and the principles laid down for one need not be the same as those for the other. Pandit Nehru said that the view of Congress was that, taken together, these two sections might mean something different. Any statement by H.M.G. must obviously be carefully considered by the Congress. The Prime Minister observed that the present statement dealt only with the interpretation of the document of May 16th. The Congress themselves had placed an interpretation on it. He could not see why an interpretation by H.M.G. extended the document if an interpretation by Congress did not do so. Pandit Nehru replied that H.M.G. as the authors of the document were capable of extending it while the Congress could not do so.

Pandit Nehru said that he did not know what the reaction of the Constituent Assembly would be. Normally speaking, a body such as that resented outside pressure and reacted from it. Compulsion destroyed cooperation. The attitude of various groups and provinces had been strongly expressed. The Sikhs, for example, had held strong views and the Congress were personally involved in this question of interpretation. He could assure Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan that all on the Congress side were anxious to find ways out honourable for both parties because they did not wish to waste the rest of their lives in conflict. They could not conceive of any constitution imposed over one part of the country by another. It was not surprising that they had to face difficulties. He did not take a dismal view of the past or the future and he thought that an unnecessarily dismal view had been taken. There was great danger of solving one difficulty and raising others of vaster dimensions in the process. To some extent it was true that this was a conflict between Indian points of view but he was convinced that, unless Indians had a free hand, other difficulties would arise. Indians must have the burden of deciding and bearing the consequences themselves.

Pandit Nehru concluded by thanking H.M.G. for their courtesy in asking him to this country.

The Prime Minister said that he would like to make three comments on what Pandit Nehru had said. Firstly, he could not admit that any addition had been made to the statement of May 16th. Secondly, the present statement could not be termed 'pressure from outside' on the Constituent Assembly. The British Government were throughout in the position of persons who were trying to assist an agreement between Indians. Thirdly, he could not agree that there was any sort of coercion on the Constituent Assembly except that of working within an agreed framework. There always had to be a framework within which such a body would work....

20. The Self-determining Status of the Constituent Assembly[1]

The Constituent Assembly will be a self-governing and self-determining body which will not tolerate any outside interference.

Reading British newspapers one gets the wrong impression that there is an impending tragedy in India which is to be averted by bringing us to London for a magical settlement. The situation in India is in many respects distressing but there is nothing to get excited about.

It is a tragic situation which has a considerable history behind it. It cannot be remedied by a magic wand. It takes a little time. It is not a question of legal argument being settled this way or that. The people's minds must be changed.

The question of success or failure of the talks has no meaning. The major thing is that the Constituent Assembly will be meeting in three days' time. The League will not be in it. It is a mechanical impossibility for them to be in it in three days' time.

The preliminary session of the Constituent Assembly will last about a dozen days and will deal with formalities and technicalities. The full session of the Assembly will meet three months later with committees working during the period in between.

1. Address to Indian press correspondents, London, 6 December 1946. From *The Hindu*, 8 December 1946 and *National Herald*, 9 December 1946.

We shall make every effort naturally to get the largest possible measure of support. The thing to remember is that the Constituent Assembly is meeting even though all its members will not be present. It is a new kind of organ which once it meets is self-governing and self-determining and will receive no directions from anyone outside. At the same time, it will work within a certain framework laid down. It will do what it chooses.

The real thing that might limit its self-determining powers is not external authority but internal factors of the situation. If internally it cannot succeed, it cannot go far. We recognise that and therefore we intend to make it succeed internally.

The important thing about the Constituent Assembly has been and is that something has been created which, however small its beginnings might be, has the capacity for growth and can go in any direction it chooses. What is most necessary in India generally is the absence of any interference from outside because any kind of interference will only be resented and create complications. Any Indian problem can ultimately be solved only by the people themselves. If others try to solve them it will result in the worsening of the situation. Compulsion will be resisted and will nullify the chief virtue of the Cabinet Mission's plan to give a very large measure of self-determination.

Apart from the long-term plan of the Constituent Assembly it is necessary to avoid interference in the working of the Interim Government because both are intimately related. If India is going to be free soon—as she is going to be—this should be reflected in the working of the Interim Government now. The Political Department, which deals with the Indian States, will continue to be completely separate from the rest of the Government of India which is an anomaly.[2] This anomalous situation gives rise to daily trouble. All these problems are so closely related that they cannot be separated or considered apart from each other.

2. Paragraph 14 of the Cabinet Mission Plan of 16 May 1946 read: "Before putting forward our recommendations we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with the attainment of Independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new government. . . ."

21. On the Statement of 6 December[1]

The evening before we left London, the draft of H.M.G.'s statement was read to us. I actually read the full statement on my return journey in the plane yesterday. Apparently some changes and additions have been made to it. Obviously the statement is a major one requiring careful consideration and it would not be proper for me to say much about it before I have consulted my colleagues. It raises important issues and is somewhat in the nature of an addition to or an amendment of the statement of May 16. Although it does so by what it says for elucidation, anything that changes in the slightest the statement of May 16 affects the whole structure laid down by the statement as understood by all, and has to be considered in that context.

The Constituent Assembly is meeting tomorrow and we will no doubt consider the whole position. The main point about the Constituent Assembly has been that it is a self-governing and self-determining body and any kind of imposition from outside will not be welcomed. It has been our purpose all along to make the Constituent Assembly as representative of all groups in the country as possible but if some people unfortunately keep away, this cannot be allowed to stop the functioning of the Constituent Assembly as a whole. More than this I cannot say at present.

Question: Was your trip to London worthwhile?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I went to London with reluctance because of the personal appeal made by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee. I was glad to meet my old friends and renew my contacts. In this sense my visit was worthwhile. Otherwise it was not so.

1. Interview to the press, Karachi, 8 December 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, *Hindusthan Standard* and *The Hindu* of 9 December 1946.

22. On the Visit to London[1]

It seemed an incredibly swift journey from London to Delhi, leaving London airport at 8.30 yesterday morning and reaching New Delhi shortly before

1. Interview to *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 8 December 1946. From *The Hindu*, 10 December 1946.

four this afternoon. This does not include the two hours' halt at Karachi, which was very welcome, because I could have a bath, etc.

Question: How is your lumbago?

Jawaharlal Nehru: It has gone completely. How it happened in the damp piercing cold of London, I myself could not understand.

I did not go anywhere in London; I had no time for anything. I went twice to No. 10, Downing Street, twice to the India Office, once to the House of Commons and once to the Lancaster House for the Government reception. Yes, I must not forget the reception at the India House by the High Commissioner[2] and, of course, the lunch at Buckingham Palace, nor the three visits to Epstein, the world-famous sculptor.[3] Each visit lasted an hour, but Epstein was not satisfied; he wanted another six sittings at least. Sitting in his enormous study, littered with all sorts of things, was not exactly comfortable, especially with the all too inadequate arrangements for heating.

Late one night after dinner, as Sir Stafford Cripps and I were discussing the Indian problem, I casually remarked that Madame Morin, one of my French friends, was desperately anxious to reach London in time to see me. Sir Stafford suggested immediate contact with the Foreign Office. Telephones buzzed from London and Berne in Switzerland and in less than 24 hours Madame Morin was in London.

Q: What would you say about the lunch at Buckingham Palace, or about your political discussions with Mr. Attlee and the three Cabinet Ministers?

JN: I don't have much to say. But I was impressed by the wide reading and varied interests of Princess Elizabeth.

Q: You look extraordinarily fresh.

JN: I slept well for the greater part of the time. The plane was doing 255 miles per hour and it is amusing how the pilot went on advancing the time as I was arriving near Delhi. Exactly 24 hours' actual flying between London and New Delhi is something to remember.

2. Samuel Ebenezer Runganadhan.
3. Jacob Epstein (1880-1959); a famous British sculptor.

23. United States Commissioner's Telegraphic Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

I had good opportunity of stressing points to Nehru last night. He replied at once that neither he nor his colleagues had any idea that expressions of U.S. interest had been made at instance British; they realized opinions were offered spontaneously and in interest of India and world. He said also that Congress realized thoroughly necessity of starting union with weak centre.

He then embarked on restrained but lengthy attack on Jinnah who he said had Hindu background and lived according to Hindu law, Nehru himself being imbued with more Muslim culture, linguistically and in other ways, than Jinnah. He said Congress had endeavoured at various stages to learn what Jinnah wanted and had never been able to receive satisfactory replies; that even Pakistan had never been adequately defined. Congress was convinced that whereas Jinnah might want some change he did not want democratic government; that prominent Leaguers being landholders preferred to continue under antiquated land laws. Congress had not liked British Cabinet Mission proposal but in interest of peaceful and fair settlement had formed Interim Government on understanding that League would cooperate. On contrary League members had announced publicly that they joined Cabinet in order to fight. Now they were saying privately that if they entered Constituent Assembly it would be with purpose of wrecking it.

Nehru believed League was on point of joining Constituent Assembly when London talks were called and H.M.G. "threw spanner into works" by announcing that constitution would not be forced on any unwilling parts of country. There was now little incentive for League to join. Nevertheless he felt League would join in end just as it had joined Interim Government.

Finally Nehru stated that despite foregoing Congress would probably shortly follow H.M.G.'s suggestion of submitting question of voting in sections to Federal Court although it realized that under circumstances it would be difficult for Court to give fair decision and that in any event if decision were unfavourable to League and H.M.G. they would not accept it.

1. New Delhi, 13 December 1946. George Merrell's note to Dean Acheson, Acting Secretary of State, 14 December 1946. *Foreign Relations of the United States 1946*, Vol. V, p. 105.

24. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

New Delhi
2 January 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,
I hope you have recovered from your indisposition.[2] I will see you today to discuss various matters. I shall try to come about lunch time but I have to go away at 2.30. Perhaps this evening we may have more time. But Aung San is coming here this afternoon or evening.

Meanwhile, I enclose a letter from Bapu for you[3] and the draft resolution prepared under his guidance for the A.I.C.C.[4]

Will you please see the cartoon in *Dawn* of 1 January?[5] This is particularly offensive.

I saw the Viceroy yesterday and our talk was very revealing about his persistent attitude to push the Muslim League on.[6] We are going to have all manner of additional difficulties. Of this later.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 4, p. 1.
2. Patel had been ill with malaria.
3. Not available.
4. See *ante*, section 1, item 18, fn. 2.
5. It depicted Mahatma Gandhi (with a skull on his head) and Nehru trying to face the Congress party with the statement of 6 December.
6. In his meeting of 1 January 1947 with Wavell, Nehru expressed his denunciation of H.M.G.'s statement of December 6, and said that "he would sooner India was divided into a hundred parts than that they should in any way abandon their principles and give in to the Muslim League." The whole attitude of the Muslim League, he said, was based on their knowledge that H.M.G. would support them to the end. Wavell, in reply, said that the Muslim League took entirely the opposite view and thought that H.M.G. had given unqualified support to the Congress. See *post*, section 3(II), item 50.

3

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM

II. Functioning of the Interim Government

1. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
4 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of the 3rd September.[2] I am sorry for the delay in answering it.

Day before yesterday, soon after my arrival for the first time in the Secretariat building, I was approached by a number of secretaries of departments whose Members had not taken charge. They appeared to take it for granted that during the intervening period of a few days they should come to me for consultation and advice. This seemed to me perfectly correct procedure and, as a matter of fact, I thought that they were doing it under your instructions. I had myself suggested this in my letter of 1st September. At that time you had said that you would think over the proposal. As a matter of fact it does not very much matter as to what happens during these few days, and normally all important matters would be kept waiting till the Member in charge arrives. In case any really important question turns up, it might be placed before the Council for decision. I have no intention of taking any responsibility on myself for executive or other important decisions during this intervening period, partly because I have sufficient work to do and partly because it will be unfair to my colleagues who will take charge soon. But I do not quite understand a portfolio remaining vacant or reverting to the Governor-General because a Member happens to be absent for a while.[3] As I understand the present procedure, which we are trying to follow, the whole Cabinet is jointly responsible for major decisions. Some of these which are important enough are necessarily placed before the formal meeting of the Council. Others which are usually dealt with by each Member separately in his department are often considered by us together whenever we feel the necessity for it. During the last three days we have met every evening for a while to discuss our common problems. We propose to continue this practice as it helps in bringing about coordination in our efforts and the burden of decision is shared by several, though the actual decision may be of the Member in charge. If a Member is absent for a while, does this portfolio suddenly revert to the Governor-General and the sense of common

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Wavell, seeing a report in the press that Nehru considered himself responsible for the vacant portfolios in the Government, contended that the Governor-General, as head of the Government, was responsible for the portfolios which were temporarily vacant.
3. The Interim Government assumed office on 2 September 1946. Of the twelve members, Baldev Singh, Shafaat Ahmed Khan, C. Rajagopalachari, John Matthai and C.H. Bhabha were not present at the swearing-in ceremony.

responsibility in regard to it cease? That would interfere seriously with the conception of Cabinet Government which we are trying to develop here.[4] In such cases the obvious course appears to be that the portfolio should either be handled by some other Member or by me as Vice-President. If the period is a long one, then the former course is preferable, but for short periods it would hardly be worthwhile to make such arrangements and the latter course would appear to be more desirable.

As you have yourself indicated, the present Council is different in nature and content from previous ones; there is a popular basis for it and because of this you decided that secretaries of departments should not approach you directly but only through the Member.[5] We welcomed this as a healthy departure from that practice which did not fit in with existing circumstances. In the same way many other departures from old practices may be necessary and desirable. Thus we shall be able to build up healthy conventions more suited to a popular and responsible form of government. Your alternative to this would be that a popular government suddenly ceases to function in regard to some portfolios because one or more of the Members are absent for a while. In practice, of course, no difficulties need arise because there is bound to be consultation on important matters and whenever necessary a reference to Council. But I do feel that the approach to this problem should be in line with the conception of a growth of popular government under responsible Ministers.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Nehru's stand was that the Interim Government would function as a cabinet and be jointly responsible for decisions. Lord Wavell thought that the constitutional position was different, but was sure that the British Government would treat the Interim Government with the same close consultation and consideration as a Dominion Government.

5. On 1 September 1946, Wavell informed Nehru that he intended to discontinue the practice of secretaries having direct access to him, but wished to continue seeing the members of the government at regular intervals.

2. To Lord Wavell[1]

5 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

You will remember that some time ago I drew your attention to the extraordinary happenings in the Sind Legislative Assembly on the occasion of the

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 421-422.

election of members of the Constituent Assembly.[2] The Assembly was suddenly adjourned by the Speaker, although there were important motions of no-confidence in the Ministry before him. The Governor of Sind played a very unusual and partial part in these happenings.

Ever since then it has been fairly common knowledge that the Governor of Sind has been doing his utmost to support the present Ministry.[3] On the pretext of the month of Ramzan the Assembly was not convened for over a month, although meetings of other Assemblies were held in other provinces during that month, and had been held in Sind also in previous years. It was obvious that if the Assembly met, the present Ministry would be defeated. Therefore every effort seems to have been made to postpone the meeting of the Assembly and meanwhile to create conditions which would in some way help the present Ministry.

It is reported that the Governor tried his utmost to induce the three European members to support the Ministry. It was also hoped that in a number of election petitions the Coalition members might lose and thus reduce the number of the Coalition opposition party. Suggestions were also made to add some more Ministers so as to give some inducement to the waverers. Meanwhile some of the Sind Ministers delivered speeches which are very remarkable for their open invitation to violence and the shedding of blood.

In spite of all this it appears that the strength of the opposition was greater than that of the Government. A press message today announces how this situation has been met by the Sind Government. It is stated that the League Party in the Sind Assembly met on the night of the 4th September at the residence of the Premier, and the five Ministers as well as the Speaker gave their resignations "to use them in any manner he thinks best in the interest of the League organisation". This has been obviously done to leave the House without a Speaker for a while and thus possibly get the Assembly adjourned again. Meanwhile, no doubt, steps would be taken for election petitions to be heard and disposed of, as far as possible, in the interest of the League Party. The resignation of the Speaker also gives a much-needed

2. The Sind Legislative Assembly was prorogued by the Governor on 12 July 1946 immediately after the elections to the Constituent Assembly were over. When the Assembly met again on 5 September 1946, the Speaker, Miran Mohamed Shah, who was a member of the Muslim League Party, resigned the Speakership with a view to enable him to increase the voting strength of the Muslim League with the support of the three European members. The Deputy Speaker, who belonged to the Congress Party, was supposed to be in the Chair, thus reducing their effective vote by one. The no-confidence motion was fixed for discussion on 11 September 1946.

3. The Governor had prorogued the Assembly at the time when a motion of no-confidence in the Muslim League Ministry was before the Assembly leaving no time for its discussion. This was construed as unwarranted interference on the part of the Governor to save the Muslim League Ministry.

vote to the Government. Even so, the Government party would be in a minority of three. If the three Europeans and the Speaker join them, then they just equal the Coalition party.

All this manoeuvring and open intrigue is bad enough. Politics may not always reach a high standard of conduct, but normally there are certain low standards which it avoids. But what is peculiarly objectionable is the part the Governor of Sind is playing in this unsavoury game. It is almost an open part and he has consistently followed it for a considerable time. This was bad enough previously, but now, with the formation of a new Government, national and popular in character, at the Centre, it can only lead to conflict with the Central Government. The Governor, I take it, is responsible to the Governor-General and through him to the Interim Government. If that is so, he has shown little sense of responsibility and his prejudices appear to have led him to misuse his position.

My colleagues and I feel strongly on this subject and I am, therefore, drawing your attention to these developments.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

New Delhi
7th September 1946

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I do not quite know who is supposed to be in charge of what are called the Centrally Administered Areas like Delhi and Ajmer. I imagine your Department (Home) is in charge. I have no doubt that you are looking into matters connected with these areas. Recently the newspapers contained rather odd accounts of proceedings in the Delhi Municipality.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. I am, however, writing to you about Ajmer which requires looking into. I was there some months ago for a brief period and I heard many stories of extreme corruption and deterioration of the whole administration there. Reports of this have again come to me and I think it would be worthwhile for you to consider this matter. The Chief Commissioner[2] there is himself involved in many of these reports and so his own account cannot be considered as impartial or reliable.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

2. Hiranand Rupchand Shivdasani (1904-1949); joined the I.C.S. in 1928 and served in the United Provinces in various capacities till 1944; Chief Commissioner, Ajmer-Merwara, 1944-47; served in the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of India, 1949.

4. To B.N. Rau[1]

New Delhi
8 September 1946

My dear Rau,

I have today dictated a hurried note about the Constituent Assembly and tried to answer some of the questions you have put.[2] A copy of this note will be sent to you. Nobody seems to know where the original should go. I am, therefore, sending it to Sir Eric Coates[3], the Secretary of the Cabinet Coordination Committee. I hope the matter will be put up soon before the Cabinet for decision.

I have read quite a number of your notes and pamphlets. I think they are very useful indeed and should certainly be produced in some kind of a book form and sent to members before the Assembly meets. It does not much matter if some people do not like the examples you have given. You should ask the members to treat your book as confidential and not meant for publication. How far you will succeed is another matter.

May I keep all these pamphlets with me; or do you want them back?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. See *post*, section 3(III), item 1.
3. (1897-1968); joined I.C.S., 1921; Financial Adviser (Military Finance) to Government of India, 1939-45; Secretary, Coordination Committee of Council, October 1945; Finance Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, 4 July - 2 September 1946; Secretary, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1946-47.

5. To G.M. Sayed[1]

New Delhi
8 September 1946

My dear Sayed,[2]
Thank you for your letter of the 6th September[3] and the copy of the letter you have sent to the Governor of Sind.[4] We are following very closely developments in Sind. Today I had a talk with Mr. Vazirani on this subject. We shall do what we can from here—of that you can rest assured.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1904); participated in Congress and Khilafat campaigns; a prominent leader of the Muslim League in Sind; at this time the leader of the opposition and the Coalition Party in the Sind Assembly.
3. Sayed requested Nehru to see that the Ministry formed by the Muslim League was not inflicted on the province any longer. He added that he was confident that 2 or 3 additional members would join his party, and with the European members generally voting with the Government he could form a stable Government.
4. Sayed asked the Governor to call upon the Ministry to resign and enable the opposition to form a ministry and ensure full working of the constitutional machinery.

6. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
8 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
After I sent you the script of my broadcast[2] yesterday, I made some minor changes in it and an addition. Perhaps you have already seen this addition in the press. The addition consisted of a sentence in the penultimate paragraph which refers to sections and groupings in the Constituent Assembly. After the first sentence I added: "We are perfectly prepared to, and we have accepted, the position of sitting in sections, which will consider the question of formation of groups."

2. I am sorry I did not send this correction to you yesterday.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. See *post*, section 9, item 3.

7. To Lord Wavell[1]

8 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th September.[2] I am aware that legally speaking the constitutional position vis-a-vis the provinces is that the Central Government is not supposed to interfere in provincial subjects. I had suggested no such interference. But in view of the change at the Centre it seems to me that the old legal position regarding the Governor necessarily undergoes some change also by convention and practice. Otherwise there may be conflict between the Governor-General-in-Council and the Governor-General acting in his individual capacity or discretion. There are a number of matters which are at present to be dealt with by the Governor-General in his individual capacity. If they are decided in a manner which does not fit in with the general policy of the Central Government, there will be difficulties and friction. The natural development following the recent changes in the Government at the Centre is that all such matters in the Governor-General's discretion might be considered by the Governor-General-in-Council. Even if this is not done formally, an informal consultation appears to be necessary to avoid conflicting policies being followed. This does not affect the strict legal position.

I drew your attention to the developments in Sind because the activities of the Governor there had been obviously partial and in some cases undesirable. These activities appear to be continuing, and only today I heard that he had suddenly postponed the meeting of the adjourned Sind Assembly to the 14th. Why he had done this is not clear, and normally this would be considered a very unusual course even though it might be within his competence. What happens in Sind or elsewhere affects the whole of India, and the Central Government has to face the consequences. Even apart from our interest in Sind, we cannot remain silent spectators of developments which would create trouble in the whole of India. We have to face a difficult situation in the country and every act has its repercussions elsewhere. It will become impossible for such a situation to be handled satisfactorily if a

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 448-449.
2. "...perhaps I should correct what appears to be a misapprehension in your mind about the constitutional position vis-a-vis the provinces. In the field of provincial autonomy, the Central Government as such cannot interfere with a province. The only control from the Centre is exercised through the superintendence and control of the Governor-General over the Governor when the latter acts in his individual judgement or discretion. In such cases the Governor-General exercises his control and superintendence in his personal capacity and not as the Governor-General-in-Council." Wavell to Nehru, 8 September 1946.

policy is pursued in one part of India which adds to the difficulties in another part. The problems are not isolated but closely interconnected. When a Governor acts in a way which not only seems to us constitutionally improper but also is definitely harmful, we have to take notice of this fact. The position in Sind has been deteriorating for some time in the past and, as far as we can see, the Governor has helped in this process. This brings not only the Government of Sind but the Governor also into disrepute. The Cabinet cannot ignore these developments which affect it so vitally.

You have, no doubt, followed the statements and speeches delivered by some of the Ministers of the Bengal and Sind Governments as well as in the press supporting them. There are open incitements to murder. The Bengal Prime Minister, in the course of an interview to the foreign press on the 22nd August, stated that if Bengal's Muslims take to the war path "there will not be a single Hindu left alive in eastern Bengal." Whether all this is the responsibility of the Governor-General alone or the Governor-General-in-Council may be a legal point for consideration. Meanwhile the incitements to violence and murder continue and affect the entire situation in India for which the Central Government is responsible.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. On Conferment of Honours[1]

The question was referred to me a few days ago about "Honours". This was done from the departmental point of view as apparently each department makes certain recommendations from time to time in regard to its own staff. At that time I said that this would have to be considered in its wider aspects.

2. The Members of the Cabinet have informally considered this matter and they are of opinion that the system of conferring Honours should be discontinued. This is one of the questions in regard to which there is a very large measure of unanimity. The Congress declared against this system

1. Note to the Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, 14 September 1946. R/3/1/267, I.O.L.R., London.

many years ago.[2] The Muslim League has recently done the same.[3] It would appear therefore that there is a general demand for the ending of this system. It is true that the conferment of Honours brings a certain incentive to a certain type of person. It is also true that it has certain obvious harmful results. In any event in the present situation of India it is certainly desirable that conferment of Honours should cease. Indeed it has come to this that a so-called Honour instead of enhancing the prestige of an individual actually may bring him discredit. Also it is probable that the offer of Honours may be refused. Government servants may perhaps not refuse them even though they might not welcome them, because such refusal would be taken to mean discourtesy to the Government or to the authority conferring the Honour.

3. We are therefore of opinion that we should inform H.M.G. that this practice of conferring Honours to Indians should cease. I have a recollection that the Canadian Parliament some years back expressed a similar opinion. I am not quite sure in what form this was done or what the effect of it was.

4. This matter raises a question of principle and I think it desirable that it might be referred to a formal meeting of the Cabinet.

2. A resolution adopted at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta in September 1920 advised "surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies" *in pursuance of the policy of progressive, nonviolent* noncooperation.
3. The "direct action" resolution, passed by the Muslim League on 29 July 1946, called upon the Muslims "to renounce their titles forthwith conferred by this alien Government."

9. To Eric Coates[1]

17 September 1946

Dear Sir Eric,
I have consulted my colleagues about the note you gave me today regarding

1. File No. 104-PS/46-PMS.

the composition of the C.C.C.[2] and the D.C.I.[3] We suggest that in the C.C.C., Asaf Ali's name should be included instead of Sardar Baldev Singh, who will have his hands full in the D.C.I. Apart from this change, your lists should be accepted.

There is one other small matter which perhaps does not arise at this stage. I should like to have an Indian officer to function either as Secretary of the D.C.I. or in some other capacity, so that we can keep in touch with the viewpoints of Indian officers in the army.[4] As to who this officer should be we can consider later.

H.E. might be asked to concur in the suggestions made.

Yours sincerely,
J. Nehru

2. The proposed composition of the Coordination Committee of Council was: Chairman—Viceroy; Deputy Chairman—Jawaharlal Nehru; Members—Vallabhbhai Patel, John Matthai, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad and Baldev Singh.
3. It was proposed to retain the existing composition of the Defence Committee which was: Chairman—Viceroy; Deputy Chairman—Defence Member; Members—Commander-in-Chief, and Members for External Affairs, Finance, Home, Industries and Supplies, Transport and Labour.
4. Coates replied on 19 September, "You would not achieve this object by putting such an officer in the Cabinet Secretariat whose functions and relations to the D.C.I. are solely secretarial, and the military authorities rightly attached the greatest importance to this."

10. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
18 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

Among the outgoing telegrams I saw yesterday a telegram from the Governor-General, War Department, to the Secretary of State for India, London. This telegram stated that in view of the requirements of defence and the political situation in India, the British troops in India should continue to remain here to protect, *inter alia*, specially European lives and property. It was stated that while the general plan of demobilisation of the Indian army should continue, the major British units should remain in

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 538-539.

India. This meant, I take it, that the Indian troops would be demobilised while British troops remained here. This telegram was dated 16th September.[2]

I was astonished to read this for it raised major questions of policy and a decision in regard to them had been taken without any reference to the Cabinet and just two days before the Defence Member was due to arrive here.[3] As you are aware, we have consistently pressed for the withdrawal of the British forces from India. Our attitude in regard to this matter is well known to everybody. It must have been obvious to the War Department and to others concerned that what they were demanding from the Secretary of State was likely to be in direct opposition to our wishes. In any event, to come to any such decision without reference to the Cabinet seems to me to have been a case of grave constitutional impropriety and of discourtesy to the Cabinet and to the Defence Member. This must necessarily have far-reaching consequences both political and financial.[4]

Soon after we took charge, you wrote to me that I should not consider myself in charge of the vacant portfolios till such time as the new Members came. I was not eager to add to my burdens as I had more than enough work to do. It was a matter of a few days only and you yourself pointed out that major issues would await the arrival of the new Members. So, while I pointed out in my letter to you that I did not appreciate in changed circumstances the continuation of the old practice to which you referred, I did not attach much importance to a gap of a few days. Our method of working, as you are fully aware, is for all of us to discuss common problems and to arrive at joint decisions for which we all are jointly responsible. There are no reserved subjects apart from those dealt with by the Political Department, and even in regard to these I have ventured to point out to you that there can be no hard and fast line. Any decision in regard to the Political Department has its repercussions on our work. But I do not wish to refer to this

2. "The Government of India have reviewed the internal defence position in India in the light of the present political situation, and though they have decided that demobilization of the Indian Army should proceed as planned they consider that, having regard to their responsibilities for public order in the country including the protection of European lives and property, any further reduction in the strength of British troops now in India...would be most undesirable for the present. They therefore request that plans for the withdrawal of all major British Army units from India either by transfer to another Command or by disbandment should now be held in abeyance for the time being. Furthermore, arrangements should be made to maintain all major British Army units now in India at their present authorised establishments...."
3. Baldev Singh assumed office as Defence Member on 19 September 1946.
4. In his reply to Nehru on 19 September 1946, Wavell wrote: "Possibly you did not notice that this telegram related to no recent decision but merely repeated a letter of the 29th July approved when the Caretaker Government was in office. I find that by some mistake in the War Department this letter was not issued at the time, and when it was referred to in correspondence the India Office asked for a copy which was sent by telegram."

aspect of the matter now. Undoubtedly the Defence Department is in charge of the Government of India as at present constituted and it cannot be separated or taken away from Cabinet control simply because the Defence Member has not arrived or is absent for a few days. Any action taken independently of the Cabinet in regard to the Defence Department or any other Department will not only affect our general policy but may also upset our plans, financially or otherwise. Obviously the retention of British troops in India when they were due to leave must add to our present financial burdens and affect our budget.

It is remarkable that while the Members of the Government of India have made it clear that they desire the withdrawal of British troops from India, a request should be made on behalf of the Government of India, without the knowledge of the Cabinet, actually to retain them for a longer period. This must be based on some judgement of the situation or policy with which we are not acquainted. It is difficult for us to function in the dark and be faced with accomplished facts.

I would request you to have this matter placed before an early Cabinet meeting for full consideration. This would involve the whole question of the retention of British troops in India. This incident also makes it clear that it is essential for the Cabinet to remain in the closest touch with developments in the Defence Department and to control the policy underlying them.

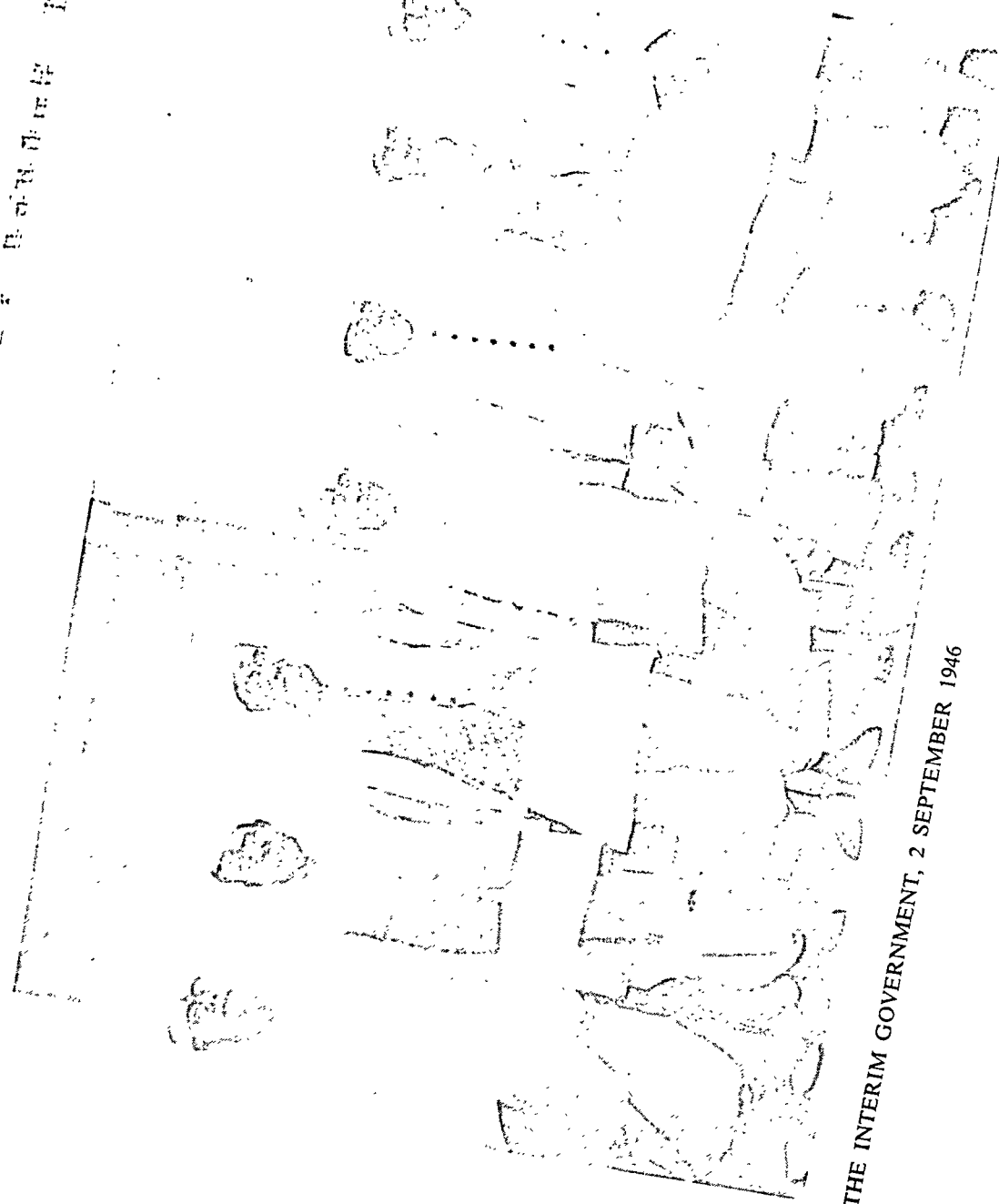
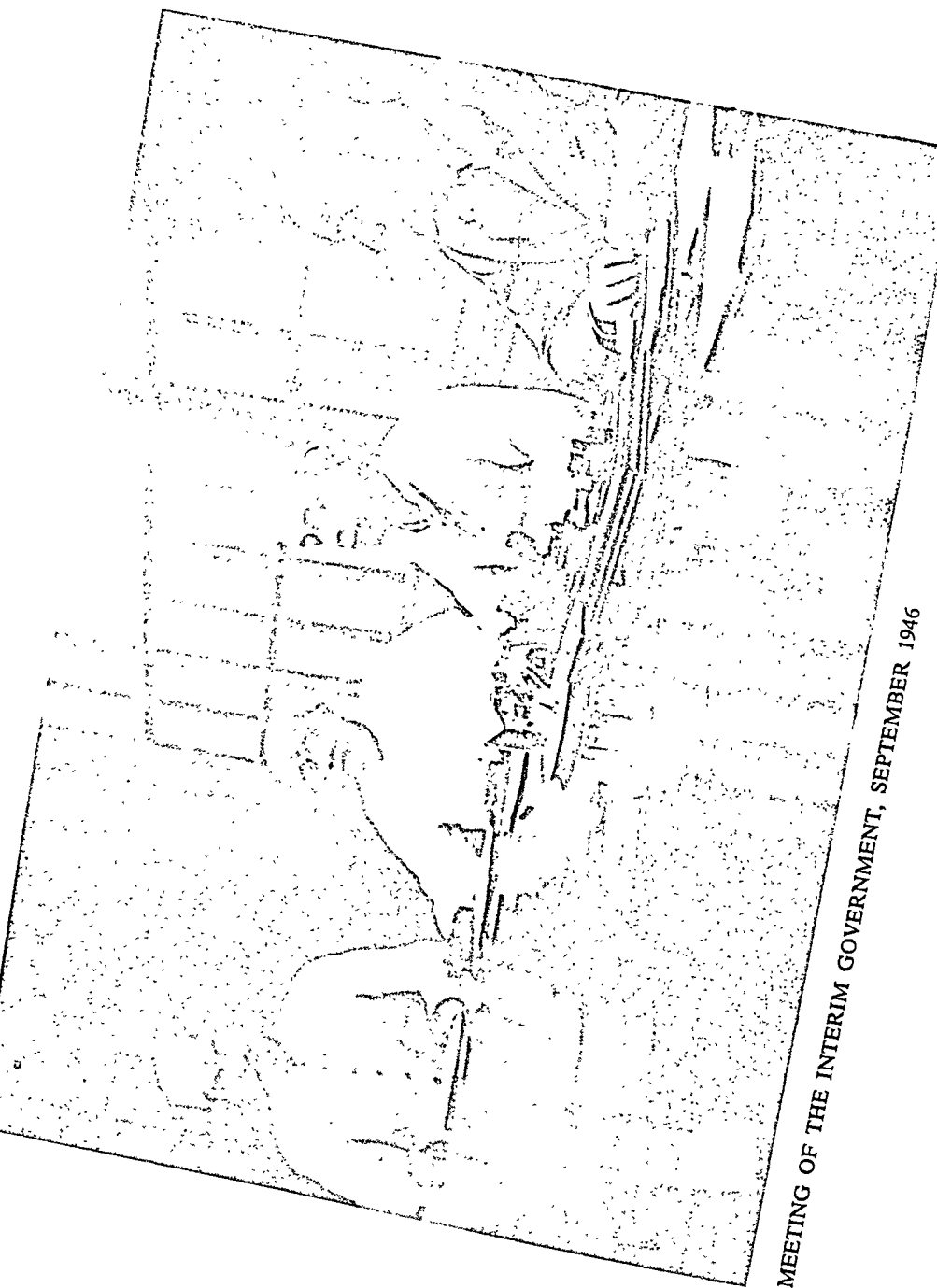
Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

11. To Stafford Cripps[1]

New Delhi
20 September 1946

My dear Stafford,

Thank you for your telegram and your letter.[2] It is good to have your good wishes for the tasks before us are tremendous. Things are certainly developing here but not always to our liking and I am afraid the future is not a rosy

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 548.
2. "I sent you a brief telegram from Switzerland with all our best wishes to yourself and your colleagues. You have got an immense task ahead of you but you have too some first rate colleagues to help you. I hope with all my heart that you will succeed in getting the Muslims into your Government as without that your difficulties will be enormously increased....God bless you all...." Cripps to Nehru, 11 September 1946.

THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, 2 SEPTEMBER 1946

MEETING OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, SEPTEMBER 1946

one. I am not referring so much to the inherent difficulties of the situation but rather to efforts being made to hamper the work of the Interim Government. The one thing that is absolutely necessary is for a definite and more or less settled policy to be followed by us and for people to realise that we are not just caretakers for a brief period. As a matter of fact, within a few days of our taking office, fresh attempts were made, without our concurrence, to reopen old issues[3] and to go back to where we were some months ago. This is very unsettling both for us and the public. The Interim Government can either function as a Government or not at all. There is no middle position. I do not wish to trouble you about these matters but I thought it better to indicate to you that we are not at all happy at developments.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

3. Doubtless Nehru had in mind Wavell's continuing efforts to bring the League into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly and to prevent Congress appointing a nationalist Muslim as a member of the Government.

12. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
21st September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have had occasion to mention to you several times that the developments in Sind were disturbing in many ways. For several years past Sind has been a black spot on the Indian political horizon and its Government has become associated in the public mind with nepotism, incompetence and corruption. Its chief function appears to be to keep itself in office even though it might not perform the normal functions of government at all. About six weeks ago the Assembly was suddenly adjourned by the Speaker, at the instance of the Governor, although notice of a vote of no-confidence was given and was on the agenda. This raised, as it was bound to do, a public outburst against this Government, the Speaker and the Governor, for it was clearly abuse of the constitutional process in order to keep the Government going although it had no majority in the House. It was recognized by you that the proceedings had been improper and pressure was brought to bear on the authorities concerned to convene a meeting of the Assembly soon to consider the motion of no-confidence. The excuse of the month of Ramzan

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 561-562.

was brought forward to postpone the Assembly session although such sessions have often been held during that month.

At least the session was held and a curious series of happenings took place unparalleled in Indian constitutional history. Every effort was made to avoid a vote and ultimately the Assembly was prorogued by the Governor. It was quite clear before this happened that the majority lay with the opposition. The Governor, however, paid no heed to this and appointed Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah[2] and another colleague[3] of his to carry on the work till the next elections were held. Today's newspapers contain the report that all the four Ministers[4], who had previously resigned, have been reappointed. Thus we go back to the previous stage in a more aggravated form and a minority Ministry has been imposed on Sind by the Governor on the eve of the elections.

I do not wish to enter into any argument about this matter, but I do wish to say that the behaviour of the Sind Ministry and the Governor amounts to a racket and a public scandal, and I am astonished that all this should have the support of higher authorities. This is setting a very bad example to the rest of India and my colleagues and I take the strongest exception to it. I should be grateful to you if you will convey our views on the subject to His Majesty's Government.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. (1879-1948); lawyer at Hyderabad, 1904-20; Minister, Bombay, 1921-28 and Member, Governor's Executive Council, 1928-34; Premier of Sind, 1937-38 and 1942-47; Governor of Sind in Pakistan, 1947-48.
3. M.A. Khuhro.
4. Pir Illahi Bakhsh, Mir Ghulam Ali Khan Talpur, Mir Bundeh Ali Khan Talpur and Pirzada Abdus Sattar.

13. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
23rd September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have read your letter of the 22nd September about Sind with deep regret.[2]

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 569.
2. "I do not deny that Sind politics are often unedifying, but the recent action taken by the Governor has had my approval. The new elections will be held as soon as possible and for the brief period until results are known, the Premier must be given the team he requires to carry on the administration." Wavell to Nehru, 22 September 1946.

If what I consider a racket and a public scandal has your approval, then it is obvious that our standards and sense of values differ considerably. It would also appear that our objectives are different. To me it is obvious that in the present set up of the Sind Government, with the present Governor and Premier and Ministers, it is difficult to conceive of a free and fair election. When there is no freedom or fairness even in regard to Assembly meetings and the Governor tries his utmost to support and encourage a minority and a discredited Ministry, then this process is likely to be continued in an intensive and aggravated form during the elections.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the policies and objectives pursued by the Governor-General and the Governor-General-in-Council are in conflict. The Interim Government may not be directly and legally responsible for certain matters which are at present in the domain of the Governor-General. But it is inevitably influenced by what happens. As you have yourself pointed out, a strictly legal view often does not fit in with practical aspects of affairs, especially during a period of swift transition. The Interim Government is placed in a difficulty when the Governor-General pursues policies which are in conflict with the policies and objectives of that Government.

The matter is of importance and likely to have far-reaching consequences. I trust that H.M.G. will be kept fully informed of our views in regard to it.

I am sorry I cannot see you this afternoon as I am participating in a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee then.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

14. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

I had an hour with Nehru. I gave him the upshot of my conversation with Jinnah[2] and told him that I was confident that a settlement could be secured

1. 26 September 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 594-595.
2. On 25 September 1946, Jinnah expressed to Wavell his hope that the Congress would not appoint a nationalist Muslim to the Cabinet to appease the Muslim League. He indicated his disapproval of the scheduled caste candidate and asked for safeguards for deciding major communal issues by a vote of both communities. He was reassured by Wavell that in the event of a vacancy of minority seats both parties would be consulted. Jinnah insisted that the long-term issue would have to be decided by the League Council, provided the controversy over the Grouping Clause was settled. He agreed to meet Nehru if the latter responded favourably to the points at issue.

both on the participation of the Muslim League in the Interim Government and in the Constituent Assembly, if the matter was handled with wisdom and statesmanship. After I had given him the account of my interview with Mr. Jinnah, more or less as in my note, the remainder of the interview was spent on the issue of the nationalist Muslim.[3] It followed the old lines, i.e. that the Congress was a nationalist body and not Hindu, and so on and so forth, with references to the "soul of the Congress" and so forth. Nehru said that at the recent A.I.C.C. meeting there had been a resolution proposed that Congress should on no account give way on this issue. He said that they had been able to secure that the resolution was not actually passed, but he said that they had given a verbal assurance that Congress would not give way.

The argument was inconclusive; I maintained that the principle need not be sacrificed and that it would be wrong to throw away an opportunity of a Coalition on a comparatively minor issue.[4] Nehru said he would come to see me tomorrow at the interview which is already fixed for noon, and I said we could then deal with the matter again.

3. The Muslim League's insistence on being regarded as the sole representative of Muslims in India became an issue over which the Simla Conference broke down in July 1945.
4. In his telegram to the Secretary of State dated 26 September 1946, Wavell reported this part of the interview in these words: "I said my insistence on a coalition was based on the obvious needs of the country. The last thing I wanted was to create a 'King's party' in the Cabinet. I wanted it to work as a team and hoped to interfere as little as possible."

15. To Lord Pethick-Lawrence[1]

New Delhi
27 September 1946

My dear Lord Pethick-Lawrence,
I am grateful to you for your letter and the good wishes you have sent. I fully realise the difficulties facing us but I have every hope that we shall be able to overcome them. For the present the burden is heavy and the air is full of suspicion of each other. This will have to pass as new problems come up before us and people's minds are diverted from old and stale issues to these living problems.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 675.

16. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
4 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd October.

I entirely agree with you that press comment should be restrained.[2] Even more so facts should not be distorted or fabricated in the press as they have been regularly and persistently in some papers criticising the Interim Government.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7,* Vol. 8, p. 654.
2. "I should be very grateful for anything you and your party can do to restrain press comment during the period from now until the Working Committee meets. I am sure you will do all you can about this." Wavell to Nehru, 2 October 1946.

17. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
4 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

Thank you for your letter of today's date enclosing a copy of Mr. Jinnah's nine points[2] and a copy of your replies.[3]

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7,* Vol. 8, pp. 657-659.
2. Jinnah's nine points listed on 3 October 1946 were: 1. Executive Council to consist of 14 members; 2. of the six nominees of Congress one should belong to scheduled caste; 3. no Muslim should be included in Congress quota; 4. in case of conflict on communal issues no decision to be taken; 5. Vice-Presidentship to be by rotation; 6. representatives of minorities to be chosen thereafter in consultation with Congress and the Muslim League; 7. important portfolios to be equally distributed between Congress and the Muslim League; 8. arrangements not to be changed without agreement of the two parties; and 9. long-term plan to be postponed till agreements were reached and the Interim Government set up.
3. Lord Wavell in his reply of 4 October agreed to four of Jinnah's nine points: 1, 2, 6 and 8. As regards the other points he thought that each party should be free to nominate its representatives; and while communal issues could not be decided by vote, such issues should be resolved in advance of Cabinet meeting through friendly discussions. The arrangement of rotational Vice-Presidents was non-feasible, but he promised to nominate a Muslim League member to preside over the Cabinet in the event of the Governor-General and the Vice-President being absent, and as Vice-Chairman of the Coordination Committee. Important portfolios would be distributed equally between the two parties. He wanted the League Council to reconsider its Bombay resolution.

There are some points to which I should like to draw your attention in order to avoid any misapprehension. I did so in the course of our conversation, but I feel that possibly the wording of some of your replies might be misunderstood. These points, or rather their replies, are not, I hope, any major issues as between Mr. Jinnah and us They refer rather to the background of our talks with you and it is desirable that this should be cleared up. You know that we have attached considerable importance to the Cabinet functioning as a team with joint responsibility and to the Governor-General acting on the advice of the Cabinet.

In point No. 2, Mr. Jinnah mentions that the six nominees of the Congress will include one Scheduled Caste representative. And yet he says further on that "it must not be taken that the Muslim League has agreed to, or approves of, the selection of the Scheduled Caste representative". I do not see how the question of agreement or approval by the Muslim League arises in regard to the nominees of the Congress. You will remember that you asked me to form the Government and I took the responsibility of placing before you certain names. While this responsibility applied to all the names I placed before you, so far as the Scheduled Caste representative was concerned it was understood, and has all along been understood, that he was one of the nominees of the Congress.[4] It is true that legally and constitutionally speaking the ultimate responsibility should be exercised on the advice of the person charged with forming the Government. This would apply very specially to the Scheduled Caste representative.

Point No. 5: As I told you, I am personally agreeable, if this helps us to find a solution, to a Muslim League Member being chosen as Vice-Chairman of the Coordination Committee of the Cabinet. I have been unable to consult my colleagues in regard to this, but I hope to get them to agree to it. I feel, however, that your answer to this question introduces a new element which creates a difficulty. You say that you will arrange to nominate a Muslim League Member to preside over the Cabinet in the event of the Governor-General and the Vice-President being absent. I think that any such nomination by you would be neither constitutional nor otherwise desirable. This, however, can be done by agreement between us. The proper course seems to me to be for us to agree to a representative of the Muslim League being made Vice-Chairman of the Coordination Committee of the Cabinet and then for this Member to be nominated as such. Further we would agree to

4. In his final offer to the Muslim League and the Congress for forming an Interim Government, Wavell, in his letter to Nehru and Jinnah dated 22 July 1946, conceded that six members including one scheduled caste representative would be nominated by the Congress.

this Vice-Chairman of the Cabinet Coordination Committee presiding over the Cabinet in the event of the Governor-General and the Vice-President being absent. As I have said above, this is my personal view.

Point No. 6: Here also I should have liked the position to be stated more clearly. If we function as a Cabinet, as we must, the whole Cabinet should be consulted before any decision is arrived at. Naturally the major parties would confer together. But the main responsibility must be of the Cabinet whose advice should be taken. It would seriously interfere with the Cabinet system, and the growth of the convention that Cabinet advice should be accepted, if the Governor-General consulted each group or individual Members separately and then came to his own decision in the matter.

What I have stated above flows from the acceptance of the principle of Cabinet responsibility and the Governor-General's acceptance of Cabinet recommendations. I understand that Mr. Jinnah accepts this position generally. If sc there is no difficulty in making the clarification which I have sought to indicate above. Our whole objective must necessarily be for the Cabinet to function together and not to be treated as consisting of separate groups which can be consulted separately as groups, thus putting an end to the cohesion and sense of joint responsibility in the Cabinet. Naturally, as you have pointed out in your answer to point No. 4, a Coalition Government either works by a process of mutual adjustments or does not work at all. So far as we are concerned, we shall certainly do our utmost to resolve all differences of opinion by friendly discussions among the Cabinet Members. As you know, we have adopted a practice of meeting daily in informal Cabinet meetings to consider not only the formal Cabinet agendas but also all important matters relating to any department. Thus any important decision, to whatever department it might relate, is considered by us jointly and actually becomes a joint decision as well as a joint responsibility. This avoids grouping within the Cabinet and at the same time helps in evolving an integrated solution or decision. If any procedure is adopted which encourages group functioning within the Cabinet and encourages separate groups to function separately, this would seriously militate against the whole conception of Cabinet Government which we are seeking to evolve and which we have already succeeded in evolving in a large measure during the past month.

What I have said above does not come in the way of the main approach to this problem. We are anxious to remove obstacles in the way of an agreement. My object in writing to you is to clarify the situation.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

18. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
6 October 1946

My dear Krishna,
This letter is being taken by Ratan Nehru who is going for the Preparatory Trade Conference.[2]

Many developments have taken place here during the last few days. I shall only write to you about one or two matters. The first is the possibility of the Muslim League coming into the Government. There is some chance of this happening though I am not quite sure yet. Jinnah is certainly anxious to come in or, at any rate, to send his men in. I think he has got thoroughly alarmed at the prospect of continuing riots and the like. He has toned down considerably. What stands in the way now is not really any major difference in actual practice but nevertheless different approaches and a different emphasis which are important enough in the long run and which might give trouble. It is quite possible that the next few days might see a decision. I need not tell you that we are insisting on the continuation of the Cabinet and the Viceroy being kept out as far as possible; on no account reference by any individual or group in the Cabinet to the Viceroy is to be made. In principle Jinnah agrees to this completely but, as you know, his whole mental background is different and I do not know what will actually happen. One thing is bound to happen to some extent—the uniformity of our Cabinet work will be somewhat affected and things may be hung up or sometimes even postponed because of this lack of a common approach. This will only apply, I suppose, to matters in which the Muslim League takes special interest. I do not think the British element will get much support directly, though indirectly they may be occasionally helped.

There are these as well as some other disadvantages involved. On the other hand the advantages are obvious. There will be a tremendous feeling of relief in the country at large, though some groups will be greatly disappointed and some will be apprehensive of the future.

I should like to impress upon you that conditions both in Sind and Bengal continue to be bad. Both the Provincial Governments are not only incompetent and corrupt but also completely crooked. The way the Sind Governor has behaved, and in the final analysis he has been supported by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, has been disgracefully bad from every point of

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Ratan Kumar Nehru was the leader of the Indian delegation to the plenary session of the preparatory committee of the International Trade and Employment Conference to be held at London.

view.[3] It has been too indecent for any proper description of it. He is openly out to keep out Congress people and their supporters and the European members of the Assembly fully support him and the Muslim League Government which is in a definite minority; and yet these very people admit that this Government is corrupt. It is clear that the British Government's attitude towards Sind and Bengal has been very largely influenced by its anti-Congress bias. They as well as the European members of Assemblies have shown that they are prepared to put up with almost anything because of this anti-Congress bias. Soon after the Calcutta killing there was a big outcry on the part of the European members in *The Statesman* newspaper against Suhrawardy's Government. But all this toned down a few days later and they lined up behind Suhrawardy.

The condition of Bengal, and more particularly of Calcutta and East Bengal, is pitiable in the extreme. The Provincial Government under Suhrawardy displays all the elements of gangsterism. It behaves essentially like the Hitler Government in Germany during its early years. In East Bengal murder and looting is a common occurrence. In the city of Calcutta both Hindus and Muslims indulge in this business, but the Muslims have the satisfaction of having generally police support and Government backing which mean a lot. Calcutta has been divided up almost completely into separate Muslim and Hindu localities and between the two there is very little intercourse. The Government functions in a shamelessly partial manner. The Governor[4] puts up with all this proclaiming that he is constitutional. The Viceroy also, with perfect constitutional propriety, does not wish to interfere.

It is not the killing that distresses me, bad as that is. What is really terrible is the sense of utter helplessness and worthlessness that has come over the people in Calcutta and some other parts of Bengal. They don't know how to get out of this terrible quandary. They kill each other when they have a chance but they realise that this does not help in the long run. Meanwhile the gangster Government entrenches itself more and more. People who come from Bengal remind me forcibly of the refugees from the Hitler terror. I have never seen anything exactly like this in India before.

As you know, a Committee of Inquiry[5] has been appointed for Calcutta

3. R.F. Mudie, the Governor of Sind, dissolved the Sind Assembly on 12 September 1946 although a no-confidence motion pending against the Muslim League ministry claimed the support of half the members of the Assembly.
4. Frederick John Burrows (1887-1973); President, National Union of Railwaymen (Britain), 1942-44; member, Soulbury Commission on Constitutional Reform, Sri Lanka, 1945; Governor of Bengal, 1946-47.
5. A commission of enquiry was appointed by the Government of Bengal on 11 September 1946 under the presidentship of Patrick Spens to inquire into the causes and the course of the disturbances in Calcutta between 16 and 20 August and into the measures taken to deal with them.

and Spens, the Federal Court Chief Justice, is President of it. I cannot myself give any opinion about the way this Committee will work. But already most people have lost faith in it because of certain preliminary steps that Committee has taken. Meanwhile it is said that prominent witnesses have been spirited away or terrorised into not giving evidence. Suhrawardy, the Premier, terrorises not only the non-Muslims but even many of his own group who are thoroughly frightened of him and his gangsterism. People talk openly of his operations of the black market and say that there is a great deal of evidence in regard to them. On two or three occasions he was on the point of being arrested. Once Casey prevented this. The principal persons who were said to know these facts have been removed from the scene and a large number of files are said to have been destroyed.

All this is not a cheerful picture but I think you should have it. Naturally we shall try to do what we can at this end; but for the moment we can do nothing effective.

In Goa Lohia has been recently arrested just for crossing the border and is now in solitary confinement.[6] A few days earlier a man was sentenced by court-martial to nine years imprisonment for some technical offence.[7] The Portuguese administration in Goa is terribly corrupt and inefficient. I am moving in this matter, but this is a round about process and will not achieve results soon. Meanwhile, of course, the agitation in and outside Goa will continue and will have our support.

Then there is Kashmir where there has been an intensification of repression. The Congress Working Committee is seriously thinking of taking up this Kashmir challenge. Before it does so it will take some preliminary steps.

Because of various other developments here, I have not taken up your matter, that is sending you some special authority, again. I shall deal with this a little later. As I have written to you, I should like you to go to the U.N.O. General Assembly on our behalf as an alternate delegate. This will take up all your time for the next five or six weeks or even more. Immediately after that you will have to go to Russia. We shall send you instructions about your visit to Russia and try to arrange that facilities be given to you. By that time I hope to get through the other formalities also.

In America you will be able to meet many people from different countries. You should discuss with them the chances and the possibility of our future cooperation. With representatives of Asian countries you should develop

6. On his way to Madgoan in connection with the civil liberties movement in Goa Lohia was arrested in the train on 29 September 1946 and was kept in solitary confinement in Aguada fort.

7. On 28 September 1946, Purshottam Kakodkar, who was tried by a Portuguese court-martial for alleged sedition, was sentenced to nine years' transportation.

special contacts and tell them about the Inter-Asian Relations Conference. We have sent out invitations to all of them, including the Soviet Asian Republics. A letter has also gone to Moscow. In the event of any of the Asian Governments not having received, so far as you can find out, please let us know by cable. We want to make this Conference a real success. There are many outstanding problems between India and her neighbour countries as I am finding out from day to day, and the Inter-Asian Relations Conference will smooth the way for us.

K.P.S. Menon will be with you in America.[8] You should discuss with him your future programme in Europe. In the U.N.O. General Assembly itself we must put up a stout fight in regard to the two South African proposals or rather one South African proposal[9] and our proposal against the South African anti-Indian legislation.[10] In both these matters (the other relates to South-West Africa which South Africa wants to absorb) it would be an excellent thing if there was complete Asian solidarity with as much help from other countries as possible.

We are having great difficulty in getting air passages to America. It is possible to reach England but from there we can't get enough passages. It is proposed, therefore, to go by a special American plane direct from India to America. If so the whole U.N.O. party will go together in this American plane. They will not go to London. You will have to go by plane or boat to America. K.P.S. Menon will, no doubt, keep you informed by cable or otherwise and will help you in getting accommodation.

In America also you might investigate quietly the possibilities of our doing publicity work. J.J. Singh has a great deal of push and energy, but I have begun to dislike him greatly from a distance. Anup Singh appears to be a more sober individual.

Remember the *Herald* in America. At present Anup Singh is functioning as our correspondent. He might continue but he might be made more effective. I do not know what you and Saran have done about machinery.

The question of appointing a High Commissioner in London is likely to come up before us rather sooner than expected. This is not because of pressure from outside but because of my own colleagues who want some-

8. K.P.S. Menon was one of the Indian delegates to the General Assembly of the United Nations.
9. Smuts proposed in the U.N. General Assembly that the annexation of South-West Africa to South Africa was necessary because integration with the Union was already almost complete, and that it was in the best interests of all to have a common fiscal system. He also gave a detailed account of the methods adopted to consult both the European and the African inhabitants. India opposed the South African proposal which was later rejected by the U.N. General Assembly.
10. See *post*, section 10(I), item 1.

thing done soon. I fear that in a hurry we might not make the best choice. We shall also soon have to decide about our American Embassy.

I am thinking of going to the Frontier tribal areas from the 15th of October for a week. This proposed visit of mine has produced some consternation in various circles and the Frontier Governor[11] is coming over to see me in two, three days to discuss my programme there. The tribal question is quite intricate. I have no doubt about the general policy we should pursue, but in practice we shall have no easy time. Among many considerations there is the interest of Afghanistan in the matter.

You had arranged to subscribe to some periodicals on my behalf—the *New Statesman, Manchester Guardian,* etc. Could you tell these people to send them to my Delhi address in future?

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

11. Olaf Caroe.

19. To M.A. Jinnah[1]

New Delhi
6 October 1946

My dear Mr. Jinnah,

I have consulted some of my colleagues about the matters discussed by us yesterday[2] and over the possibility of a rapprochement between the Muslim League and the Congress. We are all agreed that nothing could be happier and better for the country than that these two organisations should meet again as before as friends having no mental reservations and bent on resolving all their differences by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign power. We would, therefore, welcome the decision of the League to join the Interim Government for it to work as a united team on behalf of India as a whole.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 671-672.
2. The Nawab of Bhopal took the initiative in arranging a meeting between Nehru and Jinnah on 5 October 1946.

The points put forward by you in our conversation yesterday were :

(1) the formula suggested to you by Gandhiji,[3]
(2) the League not being responsible for the members at present representing the Scheduled Castes and the minorities,
(3) what should be done in case any vacancy should arise among the members representing the minorities other than the Scheduled Castes,
(4) the procedure to be adopted over what may be called major communal issues, and
(5) alternating Vice-Presidentship.

Regarding No. 1, we feel that the formula is not happily worded. We do not question the purpose underlying it. We are willing, as a result of the elections, to accept the Muslim League as the authoritative representative organisation of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India and that as such and in accordance with democratic principles they have today the unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction or limitations to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think it proper from amongst the members of the Congress. We would suggest, therefore, that no formula is necessary and each organisation may stand on its merits.

Regarding No. 2, I am to say that the question of the League being responsible does not arise and, as you do not raise any objections to the present constitution of the Government in this respect, there is no question to be solved.

Regarding No. 3, I am to say that if any such vacancy arises, the whole Cabinet will consider what should be done to replace the vacancy and advise the Viceroy accordingly. There can be no question of right in the matter of consultation with the League in regard to the representation of these minorities.

Regarding No. 4, your suggestion about the Federal Court is not feasible. Matters coming before the Cabinet cannot be made the subject matter of references to Court. We should thrash out all such matters amongst ourselves and bring up agreed proposals before the Cabinet. In the event of

3. An agreement signed on 4 October 1946 by Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the Congress and the Nawab of Bhopal and Shoaib Qureshi for the Muslim League said that the Congress accepted the Muslim League as the authoritative representative of Muslims of India but it did not agree to any restrictions in choosing its own representatives. It also hoped for team work in the Interim Government and the non-involvement of the Governor-General in any case. Mahatma Gandhi later declared that he would not ask the Working Committee to accept the formula as it stood.

failure to reach an agreed decision, we should seek the method of arbitration of our own choice. We hope, however, that we will act with such mutual trust, forbearance and friendliness that there will be no occasion to go to such arbitration.

Regarding No. 5, it is out of the question to have any rotation in the Vice-Presidentship. We have no objection if you desire to have an additional Vice-Chairman for the Coordination Committee of the Cabinet who can also preside at such committee meetings from time to time.

I am hoping that if your Committee finally decide upon the League's joining the National Cabinet they will also decide simultaneously to join the Constituent Assembly, or recommend to your Council to this effect.

I need hardly mention that when an agreement has been reached by us it can only be varied by mutual agreement and not otherwise.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. To M.A. Jinnah[1]

8 October 1946

My dear Mr. Jinnah,

I received your letter of the 7th October[2] as I was going to Baroda House to meet you there last evening. I hurriedly glanced through it and was perturbed by it as it seemed to me to be at variance with the spirit of our talk the previous day. Subsequently we discussed various points and unfortunately could not convince each other.

On my return I read through your letter more carefully and consulted some of my colleagues. They were also disturbed not only by the letter but also by the list of the points attached to it. This list had not been seen or considered by us previously. It had little relevance after our talk.

We have again given earnest consideration to the whole matter and we feel that we cannot state our position more clearly than I did in my letter to

1. Rajendra Prasad Papers, National Archives of India.
2. In his letter of 7 October 1946, Jinnah stated that Mahatma Gandhi's formula provided the basis of his talks with Nehru and unless the Congress accepted it there was no point in continuing their discussions. In quoting the formula, he omitted the second paragraph. He then listed the nine points he had mentioned earlier to Wavell.

you of October 6th, except for some variations which I shall indicate below. I shall therefore refer you to that letter of mine which represents our general and specific viewpoint.

As I have told you, my colleagues and I did not accept the formula agreed to by Gandhiji and you. The meeting between you and me was not arranged, so far as I was aware, on the agreed basis of that formula. We knew of it and were prepared to agree to the substance of that formula as stated to you in my letter of October 6th. That formula contained a further paragraph which you have not quoted in your letter :

> It is understood that all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case.

While we still think that the formula is not happily worded, we are prepared, for the sake of the settlement we so earnestly desire, to accept the whole of it, including the paragraph left out in your letter.

In that case you will agree, I hope, that we should make our further position quite clear. It is clearly understood of course that the Congress has the right to appoint a Muslim out of its quota. Further, as I have stated in my previous letter, the Congress position in regard to the Nationalist Muslims and the smaller minorities should not be challenged by you.

In regard to points numbered 2, 3 and 4 in my letter of October 6th, I have stated our position and have nothing further to add. We have gone as far as we could to meet you and we are unable to go further. I trust that you will appreciate our position.

Regarding No. 5 (the question of the Vice-President), you made a suggestion yesterday that the Vice-President and the Leader of the House (the Central Assembly) should not be the same person. In present circumstances this means that the Leader of the House should be a Muslim League member of the Cabinet. We shall agree to this.

May I add that we would welcome your personally joining the Interim Cabinet and becoming the Leader of the Central Assembly.

I am writing this letter to you after full and careful consideration of all the issues involved and after consulting such of my colleagues as are here. It is in no spirit of carrying on an argument that I have written but rather to indicate to you our earnest desire to come to an agreement and the farthest we can go. We have discussed these matters sufficiently and the time has come for us to decide finally.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

21. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
9 October, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I am writing to you about a matter concerning the U.P. Government which has assumed considerable importance. I shall only give you the facts very briefly so as not to burden you with all that has happened.

Some months back Sir Philip Measures. the Inspector-General of Police of the United Provinces,[2] took some steps in the Police Department and later issued a circular which was disapproved of by the U.P. Government. The circular itself was a strange document which indicated that there was complete lack of confidence between the Government and the Inspector-General of Police. There were certain other developments.[3] Ultimately the U.P. Cabinet, at a formal meeting, decided that Sir Philip Measures should not continue as Inspector-General of Police. The Governor, Sir Francis Wylie,[4] however disagreed with this decision and invoked his special responsibilities to prevent the Cabinet decision taking effect. This was a serious step which brought the Government and the Governor into direct conflict. The Prime Minister, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, was anxious to avoid this conflict and repeatedly he had long talks with the Governor and explained to him how it had become impossible for Sir Philip Measures to continue as Inspector-General of Police. Apart from the circular, Sir Philip had written a very undesirable letter to his chief, the Home Minister. Sir Francis Wylie, however, adhered to his decision.

The U.P. Premier subsequently had long talks with Sir Philip Measures. As a result of these Sir Philip Measures decided to take leave preparatory to retirement. He wrote a letter to this effect to the Premier, a copy of which I enclose. The Premier naturally thought that this long-standing argument had ended and he informed the Governor of this. A few days later he issued directions to the Chief Secretary and suggested another name for the Inspector-Generalship of the Police. I enclose the Premier's note on this

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 679-682.
2. Philip Herbert Measures (1893-1961); I.P.S.; Superintendent of Police, Allahabad, 1928-32; Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Southern Range, U.P., 1939-44; Inspector-General of Police, U.P., 1945-47.
3. On learning that the Home Minister, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, was in correspondence with police officers, the Inspector-General of Police issued a circular prohibiting subordinate officers from sending direct replies. The Home Minister demanded and received an apology from Measures. When the ministry wanted to publish the apology, Measures resigned.
4. Francis Verner Wylie (1891-1970); Governor of Central Provinces and Berar, 1938-40; Political Adviser to the Crown Representative, 1940-41 and 1943-45; Minister to Afghanistan, 1941-43; Governor of the United Provinces, 1945-47.

question. After all this was done the Governor again stepped in and objected to Sir Philip Measures' retirement. The Premier and he again had long talks on this question resulting in no agreement.

I am afraid I have given you the briefest of outlines of what has happened and this will not convey to you all that has happened during these past few months when the Governor has consistently come in the way of the Ministry in this and other matters. I do not wish to go into the merits of what has happened. One thing is clear—that Sir Philip Measures ceased to have the confidence of the U.P. Ministry and ultimately said he would take leave preparatory to retirement. When everything was fixed up the Governor again intervened. It is impossible for any Government to be carried on in this fashion. It is even more undesirable for an Inspector-General of Police to be involved in an argument of this kind when the police have to carry a heavy burden. This matter has taken up a great deal of time of the U.P. Ministry and added to their worries. During these past few months the attitude of the Governor, in this and other matters, has been very unfortunate and it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Ministry to carry on with the Governor. If there is this continuous conflict between the Governor and the Ministry every kind of work suffers, more specially during the difficult times we have to face now. The United Provinces is not an easy province to govern and yet the Ministry there have controlled the situation with remarkable success. They would have done much better but for this friction with the Governor.

A short while ago the Government issued an ordinance of the kind we have been issuing here to tide over the period from 1st October till the Assembly takes action in the matter.[5] This was an urgent question. Even this was suddenly held up by the Governor. I enclose a letter from the U.P. Premier addressed to the Governor in regard to this matter. Subsequently, presumably because of directions sent by you, the Governor withdrew his objection and the ordinance was issued.

These are two instances. I do not wish to burden this letter with other instances. But the point I wish you to consider is how far it is possible for this continuous friction between the Governor and the Ministry to continue. If it cannot be otherwise resolved, then one of them has to go.

Meanwhile the question of Sir Philip Measures' retirement is an urgent issue which has to be decided immediately.

You have told me on several occasions of your desire not to interfere with provincial autonomy. Because of this things have happened in Bengal and Sind which have shocked vast numbers of people in India and yet there has

5. The United Provinces Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance, 1946, promulgated by the Governor on 3 October, provided for the maintenance of public order and essential services through preventive detention, imposition of collective fines, and the control of meetings and processions.

been what is called a scrupulous non-interference with the Ministry, even though that Ministry should be responsible for disaster and corruption on a big scale. Apparently this conception of provincial autonomy differs in the United Provinces or some other provinces. It applies chiefly to Bengal and Sind.

I realise that in strict law the Interim Government cannot interfere with the functioning of the Bengal and Sind Governments or with the activities of the Governors there. But whatever the law may be on the subject, I should like to make it perfectly clear that the Interim Government has taken and takes the most serious view of happenings in Bengal and Sind.

I have received copies of communications addressed to the Governor-General by Mr. G.M. Sayed,[6] the leader of the Opposition in the Sind Assembly. These communications give details of very serious misbehaviours by district officials.[7] That is not surprising when the Governor himself is adopting that attitude. But it makes clearer that the present Government there[8] and the Governor are not interested in free and fair elections, but are likely to do their utmost to prevent a proper election so that the people of their choice might get elected. Vague statements of good intentions mean nothing at all when in practice behaviour is in opposition to those statements.

Whatever the law may be, surely it cannot be thought right or desirable to flout public opinion and to act in direct opposition to the declared wishes of the Interim Government. In our view the limits of decency have been transcended in both Bengal and Sind. When a Governor has lost the respect of a very large number of the people of the province and is considered to be partial to particular groups, then his utility ends and his continued presence is a challenge and a provocation.

Previously I have written to you about some of these matters and requested you to inform H.M.G. of our views in regard to them. I do not want H.M.G. to remain in ignorance now, and then to be confronted suddenly with grave developments. I trust, therefore, that you will be good enough to inform H.M.G. of the views of the Interim Government in regard to the matters referred to above.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. The letter of 3 October 1946 was regarding the interference in the Sind Assembly elections by the District Collector of Nawabshah, who attempted to coerce an ex-minister of the province to join the ministerial party and seek its support in the elections.

7. Mohammad Masud (b. 1916); I.C.S.; collector and District Magistrate, Nawabshah, Sind, 1946.

8. The Government of Sind consisted of the Premier Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah and M.A. Khuhro.

22. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
11 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter No. 1342 of the 11th October.

I do not think it would serve any useful purpose to discuss further the case of Sir Philip Measures, the Inspector-General of Police in the United Provinces. This case has been considered and discussed repeatedly during the last few months and the U.P. Cabinet came to a decision unanimously. There is no misunderstanding in the matter, and if there is a misunderstanding, it is obvious that the Governor and the U.P. Ministry cannot understand one another.[2] In the result the U.P. Cabinet decision has been overridden by the Governor and even Measures' resignation not accepted. You write to me that you agree with the action of the Governor.[3] I shall be grateful to you if you will let me know definitely whether this means that Sir Philip Measures is going to continue as Inspector-General of Police in the U.P. in spite of the decision of the U.P. Cabinet. If so, then naturally some other consequences will inevitably follow as it is not possible for any provincial or other Cabinet to submit to such an imposition. I have no doubt that you and the Secretary of State for India realise what these consequences are likely to be.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 693.
2. Replying to Nehru on 11 October 1946 Wavell wrote: "I do not wish to go into the details and merits of the case, but the reason for Measures' resignation seems to have been a complete misunderstanding of the terms of the decision which the Governor had taken in his individual judgement, and it is because of this misunderstanding... that the Governor has refused to accept the Inspector-General's resignation."
3. "I agree with you in regretting such friction as has occurred between the Governor and his Premier, but the Governor's special responsibility still exists, and cannot be treated as if it did not exist. I have been in touch with him throughout and agree with the action he has taken...." Wavell to Nehru, 11 October 1946.

23. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
13 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have received your letter of today's date intimating to me that Mr. Jinnah has informed you that the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League have agreed to nominate five persons on their behalf as members of the Interim Government.

I shall place this matter before the Members of the Cabinet for their consideration.[2] It will be necessary for us to know the names suggested by Mr. Jinnah for inclusion in the Interim Government and the terms in which he has conveyed the Muslim League's decision to you. This information is necessary to enable us to consider how we should proceed in this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 711.
2. Lord Wavell minuted: "It has nothing to do with the Cabinet."

24. To M.A. Jinnah[1]

13th October 1946

My dear Mr. Jinnah,
I thank you for your letter of October 12.[2] In this letter, there are a number of mis-statements. What you have said does not fit in with my recollection of our conversations, or what has taken place during the past few days. I need not however go into this matter now, as I have been informed by the Viceroy that the Muslim League have agreed to nominate five persons on their behalf as members of the Interim Government.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 711.
2. In his letter of 12 October, Jinnah expressed his surprise at Nehru's contention that the meeting of 5 October arranged between them was not on the agreed basis of Mahatma Gandhi's formula and that paragraph 2 formed an integral part of the formula. He also declined to agree that the Congress represented the nationalist Muslims and the minorities.

25. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

1. I told Pandit Nehru that as I had written to him, the Muslim League had decided to join the Interim Government. I said that it was not for the Cabinet to discuss the names, although Nehru was of course at liberty to consult any of his colleagues he wished. I could not undertake to submit Jinnah's names to Nehru as soon as I got them. I should have to submit them to the King for his approval.

2. Nehru said that knowledge of the Muslim League names was important to him; did Mr. Jinnah intend to come in himself, for instance?[2] I said that I had no knowledge at present of the League's names; I did know that the League had in mind the inclusion of a non-Muslim, but I did not know what their final decision would be. He did not comment on this.

3. He then asked on what basis Mr. Jinnah was coming in, and said that his discussions with Mr. Jinnah had led to nothing and that Mr. Jinnah's letters had always evaded the point; his last one had been "frankly amazing". We had some discussion on the points which Jinnah had put to me and my replies,[3] of which I had sent a copy to Nehru. There was some discussion on the matter of the minority representatives; Nehru's point was that Jinnah should not have any veto on the appointment of a representative. I said that I quite agreed that this would be so, and that I did not think the matter would really cause any great difficulty.

4. I then showed Nehru Jinnah's letter of acceptance, which he read with some apparent amusement.[4] I said that it was a typical letter of accept-

1. 14 October 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 720-722.
2. On 25 September 1946, Jinnah indicated to Wavell his personal desire to stay out of the Government, but feared that he might be pressed into going in.
3. In an interview with Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan on 13 October 1946, Wavell expressed his hope that Jinnah had understood that the presence of the Muslim League in the Interim Government would be conditional on their reconsideration of the Bombay Resolution and acceptance of the statement of May 16th. Jinnah said that it would be necessary first to secure certain guarantees from the Congress, and that the Council of the League must be called together to withdraw their Bombay Resolution. Wavell said that this should be done as soon as possible.
4. Jinnah in his letter of 13 October 1946 to Wavell wrote that though the Working Committee of the League did not approve of the basis and scheme of setting up the Interim Government, whose imposition was contrary to the Declaration of 8 August 1940, yet in the interest of Muslims and other communities and on other weighty grounds it had decided to nominate its quota of five members to the Executive Council.

ance from one of the Indian political parties, in that it objected to everything possible which was being accepted before accepting it.

5. He then asked about the long-term issue; was it to be assumed that Mr. Jinnah had accepted this? I told him that I had explained to Jinnah that his entry into the Interim Government must be considered as conditional on his acceptance of the long-term plan. I said that Mr. Jinnah had replied that he was prepared to call a meeting of his Council to reverse their Bombay decision as soon as he was satisfied that the statement of May 16th would be observed.

6. I then asked Nehru when he could give me his names. He said that it was not quite decided yet who would go out, possibly all three present Muslim members would retire and an outside Muslim come in; and they had to decide which of the present Hindu members would make room for him. He said that Sarat Chandra Bose returned tomorrow and that they wanted to wait till they could consult him. He was quite definite that Congress would include a Nationalist Muslim.

7. I then said that we must get this matter settled before Nehru went to the Frontier, and I presumed that he would postpone his visit.[5] He was obviously reluctant to do this and said that if we got things fixed up tomorrow and were able to make an announcement, it would not matter if there were subsequently an interval of a few days before the new Cabinet took over. I tried to persuade him to postpone the visit and said that I very much deprecated what would be regarded as a purely party approach, also it would be most embarrassing if his visit to the Frontier resulted in disturbances. He was very unwilling to give up the visit, but promised that he would not make it a party business, and would in anything he said emphasise his welcome of a Coalition.

8. I then referred to the matter of portfolios, and said that I had had some discussion with Mr. Jinnah about these,[6] and that the following considerations might help him. Of the four main portfolios—those always held before by British representatives: Defence, External Affairs, Home, and Finance—it was generally agreed that Matthai should remain in charge of Finance. I considered that the Muslim League must have one of the three remaining portfolios. I should prefer that Baldev Singh remained as Defence Member, and I presumed that Nehru would not wish to give up External

5. Nehru's tour of the North-West Frontier Province began on 16 October 1946.
6. On 12 October 1946, Jinnah suggested the allotment to the League of the portfolios of Defence, Commerce, Transport, Posts and Air, and Law.

Affairs. He agreed with both these propositions, but said that it would be very difficult to shift Patel. I said that I must leave this to him, but that I did regard it as essential that the Muslim League should have one of these portfolios. I said that it was also essential that the Muslim League should have either Commerce or Industries & Supplies.

9. We discussed other outside matters on which there was no difficulty. Nehru was quite friendly throughout.

26. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
14 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
You were good enough to show me today Mr. Jinnah's letter of 13th October in which he expressed the Muslim League's readiness to nominate five persons for the Interim Government. I have not got the copy of this letter with me, but as far as my memory goes most of it was concerned with expressing his disapproval of the Interim Government. This was a somewhat curious prelude to the decision to join it. However what I am concerned with is the latter part of the letter in which he states (I am relying on my memory) that the Muslim League would join the Interim Government in terms of your broadcast[2] and your letters to Mr. Jinnah dated 4th October and 12th October.[3]

It is important for us to understand exactly how he proposes to join and what these terms are to which he refers. Various statements in newspapers, and more especially in the official Muslim League organ, are disconcerting

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*. Vol. 8, pp. 722-724.
2. In his broadcast on 24 August 1946, Wavell reiterated his offer to the Muslim League to suggest five names for places in the Cabinet of fourteen members. The ratio of Congress, League and nominated minority places was to be 6: 5: 3. He guaranteed an equitable distribution of the most important portfolios and assured the League that the terms of the statement of May 16 would be adhered to and no changes or modifications would be made.
3. "I confirm what I told you this evening, that the Muslim League are at liberty to nominate any one they wish for their own quota of seats in the Cabinet, though any person proposed must of course be accepted by me and by His Majesty before being appointed.

   My intention is to discuss portfolios when all the names have been received, both from the Muslim League and the Congress." Wavell to Jinnah, 12 October 1946.

in the extreme.[4] Our past experience does not encourage us to rely on vague and ambiguous phrases. These usually lead to misunderstandings and subsequent argument which is not edifying. It is desirable, therefore, to be precise in such matters and to know exactly where we stand.

We know the terms of your broadcast in August last and I have seen your letter to Mr. Jinnah dated 4th October. I have not seen your letter to him dated 12th October. I trust that this does not contain anything beyond what was contained in the broadcast or the letter of the 4th October. If so we should be informed of it so that we might know what the exact position is.

As I understand it, the offer you made in your broadcast was that five places in the Interim Government could be taken by the Muslim League. In your letter of the 4th October you made it clear that a Coalition Government must necessarily work as a team and not as a joining together of rival groups which did not cooperate for a common purpose. Further you stated that the basis for participation in the Cabinet must, of course, be presumed to be the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's statement of 16th May.

It seems to us much better that any possible misunderstanding should be removed at this stage so that it may not come in our way later on. We have to face a difficult situation. So far as we are concerned we shall make every effort to work cooperatively and as a team. During the last six weeks we have done so with considerable success and to the advantage of our work. Almost every decision of ours, to whatever department it might have belonged, has been taken after joint consultation and agreement. This has made us to some extent jointly responsible for the working of various departments and the burden of any particular portfolio has been shared by others. We propose to continue to work in this manner. How far the Muslim League members share this outlook with us I do not know. Any other approach would lead to friction and delay in the disposal of our work. In any event we think it is necessary for us to know as fully as possible the terms to which Mr. Jinnah refers in his letter of October 13th. If there is any variation or addition to them as contained in your broadcast and your letter of the 4th October, we should be informed of it.

I had hoped to receive from you today the list of names suggested by Mr. Jinnah on behalf of the Muslim League for membership of the Interim Government. This information would help us considerably in many ways in shaping our own policy. Even the division of portfolios should depend on the kind of persons who are available. I hope that you will be good

4. On 2 October 1946, *Dawn* published an article under the title, "One Black Month of Blood, Tears & Trouble", denigrating the achievements of the Congress in the Interim Government. On 6 October it stated in an editorial: "They (the Congress) have to be paid back in their own coin, and when the time comes—it seems very near already—Muslims will have to talk to them in a different fashion."

enough to inform me of Mr. Jinnah's proposed list so that we can then come to our own decisions.

We have no desire to delay matters in any way, and I should like all preliminaries to be settled, if possible, by the 15th evening before I leave for the Frontier. But for the moment we are rather held up by lack of information. If the preliminaries are settled soon, the remaining steps can be taken a few days later after my return from the Frontier and your return from Bombay. One of my colleagues, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, has, I understand, just returned to Delhi although I have not seen him. Another colleague, Mr. Bhabha, is away from Delhi and I am not sure when he is due back. It would be unbecoming for us to make big changes in the constitution of the Government without the knowledge of our colleagues and in their absence. It is a painful matter for me to have to part with some of my colleagues who worked efficiently and with a complete sense of cooperation in common effort. We shall do so, however, because of what we consider the larger good. These colleagues themselves have been very good to me and have appreciated the position. I am deeply grateful to them for this. But the least I can do is to treat them with courtesy and not to do anything suddenly which might distress them and show a lack of consideration for them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

27. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
15 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
In continuation of our conversation of this morning I have to inform you that we propose the following changes in the Interim Government. We have to provide for five places for the representatives of the Muslim League. There are at present two vacancies.[2] Thus three present members have to resign in order to give place to newcomers. We have decided, with their consent, that Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan and Mr. Syed Ali Zaheer should retire.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 733-734.
2. Of the 14 seats in the Interim Government only 12 were filled. Two more Muslim members were to be appointed later.

I take it that, except for an announcement of the proposed changes, no other steps will be taken till my return from the Frontier. That is to say that the present Members will continue to function till I return from the Frontier. They will then hand over charge to the new Members presumably after allotment of portfolios.

The question of dividing portfolios will have to be considered together with the new Members. I suggest that this also should be done after my return. In this connection I should like to repeat to you what I said this morning that there should be as little disturbance as possible in the present arrangement. Some disturbance is inevitable. But it would be undesirable to reshuffle any portfolios which are in charge of the representatives of the smaller minorities. They have been doing good work and it would be unfair to them to make any change. Also that the present portfolio of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel should remain with him. Whatever might have been done at the time of the formation of the Government if the Muslim League had then come in, at the present moment to ask Sardar Patel to leave his portfolio would be an act of extreme discourtesy to him. He has been made a special target of attack by the official organ of the Muslim League and it becomes, therefore, still more unbecoming for us to ask him to leave this portfolio.[3] Indeed I do not think he will care to remain in the Government if he is asked to do so.

For my own part I should like to continue to retain External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations.

I should like to have an opportunity for myself to express my deep gratitude to those of my colleagues who are going to retire from Government. They have justified their selection in every way and it is a matter of considerable concern to me that I should have to part with them in this way. They have played the game in the best of spirits and their loyalty to a larger cause is evident from the way they have willingly agreed to retire at this moment. It is not for me to say in what manner mention might be made of this fact, but it would be in the fitness of things to say something about it.

I hardly think that it will serve any useful purpose for me to see you again this evening. But if you desire to meet me, you will please let me know. I imagine that no further conversations will be necessary till I return from the Frontier. If, however, any point arises for mutual consideration I suggest that you might consult Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on our behalf.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. The editorial in *Dawn* of 15 October criticized Vallabhbhai Patel's speech on the freedom of the press at the All India Newspaper Editors conference and charged him with attempting to impose press censorship in 1938.

28. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
15 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of the 15th.[2] I have already sent you a letter this evening which you must have received. The members who are resigning have promised to send their resignations to me to be forwarded on to you. If I receive them before I leave for the Frontier, I shall send them to you. Otherwise they will be sent on later.

We have not raised any objection to the names proposed on behalf of the Muslim League. We do not wish to do so as we had agreed to give them the freedom to nominate five members of their choice. But I think I owe it to you to tell you privately and personally that I regret deeply the choice which the Muslim League has made.[3] That choice itself indicates a desire to have conflict rather than to work in cooperation. This is especially evident in their choice of a member of the Scheduled Classes. The other names, except one, are not of a standard which we would associate with the Cabinet of the Government of India. Both in regard to intellectual capacity and moral quality, I fear the standard of the Cabinet will be much lowered by their association.

We shall try, as I have informed you, to cooperate and to carry on our work in a spirit of team-work. But it seems obvious that the Muslim League has no such intention and they have not even taken the trouble to send their most suitable men. This means that our work in future will not be easy and that we shall have to face heavy weather.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

I enclose the three letters of resignations.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 735.
2. "I enclose a copy of my letter to Mr. Jinnah dated 12th October. There have been no assurances or explanations to Mr. Jinnah that go beyond the terms of the broadcast and the letters of the 4th and 12th October." Wavell to Nehru, 15 October 1946.
3. The nominees of the Muslim League to the Interim Government were: Liaquat Ali Khan, I.I. Chundrigar, Abdur Rab Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Jogendra Nath Mandal.

29. To Sarat Chandra Bose[1]

New Delhi
October 15, 1946

My dear Sarat,
Thank you for your letter enclosing your letter of resignation addressed to the Viceroy.

May I express my gratitude to you for the sporting and graceful way in which you have faced a difficult situation. The last six weeks of working together will be long remembered by me. Of course this was nothing new so far as you and I are concerned and we are going to work together in many fields in future. Still it has been a pleasure to have this cooperation among colleagues.

I hope to meet you on my return next week.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

30. Telegram to Rammanohar Lohia[1]

Your letter of October 10th received and action being taken upon it. Please refrain from going to Goa or taking any precipitate action.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. 15 October 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 27(10)-X/47, p. 15/corr., National Archives of India.

31. To Rammanohar Lohia[1]

New Delhi
15th October 1946

My dear Rammanohar,
Your letter of the 10th October reached me last evening.[2] I am dealing with the matter officially. In view of this fact it is not desirable for you to return to Goa at present. Obviously, the approaches must not conflict with each other. I do not, of course, want to restrain you for ever.

We are taking steps to appoint a Consul in Goa who could carry out our directions more effectively.

I understand that Gandhiji has asked you to come here. That would be helpful for all of us. I am going to the Frontier tomorrow morning for a week.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. External Affairs Department File No. 27(10)-X/47, p. 19/corr., National Archives of India.
2. Lohia had said that his arrest on his entry into Goa was contrary to international law. It being "definite" that he would have to go back to Goa, he inquired whether Nehru was inclined to act in the matter.

32. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

We began with some discussion of his recent visit to the Frontier.[2] He was inclined to complain that all the trouble happened at visits which had been officially arranged, whereas where the arrangements were made unofficially and without notice things went much better. I asked him whether he implied

1. 22 October 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 763-764.
2. Nehru visited the Frontier from 16 to 21 October 1946. His Frontier tour was marked by a number of demonstrations against him. Near Malakand Fort, the car in which Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib were travelling was stoned. All of them were slightly injured. See also *post*, section 5, items 9-21.

that the Political Department had fostered the disorders,[3] and he said that he was not accusing the Department, but that he was sure that certain political officers were not impartial.

We then had some discussion on the problems of the Frontier and the tribes generally, and also of the North-East Frontier. Nehru was quite reasonable about these and discussed them sensibly.

2. We then went on to portfolios. He said that he had had my letter,[4] but that he had not had the opportunity of consulting his colleagues. He emphasised the difficulties of moving any of the minority representatives; and he would be very averse to giving up the External Affairs portfolio himself, especially after what had happened on the Frontier. He said that it would be very difficult to persuade Patel to move from the Home portfolio. I suggested that he should make a special appeal to Patel on my behalf to take the Works, Mines and Power portfolio, which I said was a most important one, and required a man of his calibre. He listened to this without much comment.

He then said that it might perhaps be possible to move Bhabha from Commerce.

I said that if these portfolios could be arranged, I did not think there would be much difficulty over the others, and suggested that Posts and Air, Education, and Law, might go to the League.

Nehru said that he would let me have his views on portfolios after Council tomorrow.

3. He then asked about Mr. Jinnah's intentions on the long-term plan, and we had a certain amount of argument about this on the old lines.

I then told him that I had instructed the Governor of the Punjab to proceed with the election of the Sikhs to the Constituent Assembly, if they agreed. He concurred and said that he thought that this had been done long ago.

4. I then talked of the Eastern Bengal trouble and the communal tension in India generally; and said that the only hope was the success of the Coalition at the Centre and an appeal by the leaders to their followers to abstain from communal disturbances. He said that would be all right if the Coalition

3. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had accused the Political Department of deliberate conspiracy to murder leaders. Nehru thought that the Political Department had had a hand in the car-stoning incident and demanded an inquiry against the political officer.
4. "I am afraid I cannot accept the position stated in your letter dated 15th October that the Minority representatives must all continue to hold their portfolios and that the most important portfolios held by the Congress nominees must also remain with them. It is, I think, inevitable that I should ask that one of the following portfolios should be made available to the Muslim League: External Affairs, Home, or Defence. Similarly I think the Muslim League must have either Industries and Civil Supplies or Commerce." Wavell to Nehru, 22 October 1946.

worked, but that there was not much sign of its doing so. He referred to the speeches[5] by Liaquat Ali Khan and Ghazanfar.[6]

5. We then discussed the question of Honours, and he said he would let me know in a couple of days.

6. He finally raised the Measures case, and I told him of the account I had received, i.e., that Measures' resignation was due to a misunderstanding of a discussion with the Premier; that I had not yet replied to his letter because I was still in consultation with the Governor. He said that he had seen all the papers in connection with the case, and that he thought the issue was quite simple. The Premier said that he was sick and tired of all the discussions with the Governor, who always raised some fresh issue. We left it at that.

7. Nehru was subdued, and looked very tired.

5. See *post*, item 33, para. 5 and item 34, para. 6.
6. Ghazanfar Ali Khan (1895-1963); Member, Central Assembly, 1923, Council of State, 1933; Parliamentary Secretary to the Punjab Government, 1937-44; Member, Health Department, Interim Government of India, 1946-47; Cabinet Minister, Pakistan, 1947-48; Ambassador to Iran, 1948; High Commissioner to India, 1953-56.

33. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
23 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have placed your letter of the 22nd October, in which you discussed the allotment of portfolios, before some of my colleagues. I have also given them some account of our conversation yesterday. We feel strongly that, in existing circumstances, it would be improper to make any change in regard to the three portfolios you mention, namely External Affairs, Home, and Defence. I need not go into the reasons for this as I have already mentioned them to you. In regard to the portfolio of Commerce a change may be possible. There are also, as you know, five other portfolios which are at present available. These are :

Education
Health
Posts, Telegraphs and Air Services
Works, Mines and Power
Legislative

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 777-779.

2. Before, however, the question of portfolios arises, there are two or three other questions which have to be cleared up, more especially because of some recent happenings. We have been eager for the Muslim League to come in because of our earnest desire to put an end to communal friction and promote harmonious working. But this very fact has been obscured and rendered vague and doubtful by these recent occurrences. You know how arguments and difficulties have arisen in the past over any matter left vague. It would be exceedingly unfortunate if we did not clarify the position completely before starting this new experiment. To have friction and dispute after the Muslim League comes into the Government would be a bad beginning and may lead to consequences which none of us desire.

3. In my correspondence with you and in your letters addressed to me as well as to Mr. Jinnah it was made clear that the Muslim League's joining the Interim Government meant inevitably their acceptance of the long-term scheme of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the statement of May 16th. I need not trouble you with references to this in various letters. It was pointed out then that a formal decision of the Muslim League to this effect would have to be taken by the Council of the League as they had originally passed the resolution of non-acceptance. Nevertheless, it was made clear that the Working Committee of the League would itself recommend the acceptance of this scheme and the formality could follow soon after. It was on this basis that we proceeded.

4. Now it is by no means clear what the position of the Muslim League is in regard to the long-term arrangement. We do not even know the terms of the resolution passed by the League Working Committee, nor, so far as we know, has the Council of the Muslim League been convened to consider this question. When I asked you about this yesterday, I was told that Mr. Jinnah wanted certain assurances. This obviously means that even Mr. Jinnah and his Working Committee have not agreed to accept the statement of May 16th unless something further happens, i.e., certain further assurances are made to him. This puts us in a very false position and leads one to think that the steps already taken have been premature. If there is any question of assurances, it is for the Muslim League to assure you and us that they will endeavour to work in the Interim Government in a harmonious manner as a team with the rest of the members of the Cabinet. Instead of this we are asked to furnish the assurances. This again might lead to further arguments and discussions without end. We are not prepared to discuss this matter any further. We have made our position perfectly clear in formal resolutions of the Congress Working Committee.[2] So far as the Muslim League is

2. See *post*, item 34, fn. 7.

concerned, the only resolution we have at present is that of their Council rejecting the long-term scheme.[3] Apart from this there is only vague talk which can mean anything or nothing.

5. Our misgivings are increased by recent speeches made by two of the proposed Members of the Interim Government, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, which clearly point to a course of action on behalf of the League which is in direct opposition to cooperative and harmonious working of the Interim Government.[4] Difficulties might arise even if we work with the best of intentions. But here even the intentions are proclaimed to be to create friction and trouble. Unless this matter is cleared up in an unequivocal manner, any attempt to work together would be doomed to failure.

6. We suggest, therefore, that these two points should be cleared up :— (1) The Muslim League's acceptance of the long-term scheme as embodied in the statement of May 16th subject only to a formal ratification by the Council of the League at an early date which should be fixed. (2) The approach of the League to the Interim Government and in particular whether Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan's and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan's speeches recently delivered represent that approach or not.

7. If this clarification is satisfactory, the next step to be taken is the allotment of portfolios. This second step cannot precede the first for it is dependent upon it and governed by it.

8. From past experience you will appreciate how this clarification and precision are necessary in order to avoid future trouble. This is all the more necessary because the Muslim League are not joining the Interim Government after an agreement with the Congress. Even as it is we welcome their coming in, but that coming in would have little value and in fact might even be harmful to all concerned if it was really a prelude to inner as well as outer conflicts.

9. You know how deeply all of us have been moved and distressed by the tragic happenings in East Bengal. On my return here today I have been

3. The League rejected the Cabinet Mission scheme on 29 July 1946.
4. On 19 October 1946, Ghazanfar Ali Khan said that the League would use its position in the Interim Government as a foothold for achieving Pakistan, and treat it as a part of its direct action campaign. Liaquat Ali Khan declared on 20 October 1946 that the League would fight in the Interim Government for Pakistan and would view each problem from the communal angle.

overwhelmed by painful messages from East Bengal. I cannot verify all the statements made and it is quite possible that there is a good deal of exaggeration, but allowing for all exaggeration what remains is still a horrible thing of vast dimensions. The whole of India has been painfully moved. We are receiving messages from Assam of thousands of refugees from Noakhali District pouring in daily. This is the background to any action that we might take and my recent experiences in the Frontier Province and the tribal areas have not produced any feeling of assurance in me about the future conduct of the Muslim League. We cannot take any step unless we make sure that it will lead to an improvement of the situation. The very least that we can expect is a clear statement from the Muslim League of their intention in joining the Interim Government and their acceptance of the long-term plan.

10. The allotment of portfolios will then follow. In regard to this I have stated above that we cannot accept any change in regard to External Affairs, Home, or Defence. This is not because they are more important than other portfolios, for there are some others which are in many ways more important still. But for particular reasons which I have pointed out to you it is highly undesirable to effect any change in regard to these three portfolios.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

34. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
23 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of the 23rd October. This was delivered to me this evening. You suggested that I should send you a reply today. I am sorry

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 781-785.

I have not been able to do so in the short time at my disposal. The matter is a serious one[2] and I did not wish to send you a reply before consulting my colleagues again, I am writing this letter late at night and it will be delivered to you tomorrow morning.

2. The immediate question before us is one of the allocation of portfolios. But we have inevitably to consider it in connection with other matters and in the context of recent events and present happenings. Hence in my letter to you of today's date I drew your attention to some of these governing factors.

3. I am glad that Mr. Jinnah has assured you that the Muslim League is coming into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of cooperating,[3] further that you have made it clear to Mr. Jinnah that the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government is conditional on the acceptance of the scheme of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the statement of May 16th.[4] While you have made this clear to Mr. Jinnah, it is not equally clear what the Muslim League's view is on this subject. You will remember that in the case of the Sikhs you asked for a definite resolution of acceptance of the scheme contained in the statement of May 16th. A previous vague resolution on the subject passed by the Panthic Board of the Sikhs was not considered sufficient.[5]

4. There is one matter which I should like to clarify to avoid any possible misunderstanding. You have referred not only to the statement of May 16th but also the explanation given by the Cabinet Delegation in their state-

2. In his letter of 23 October 1946, Wavell asked Nehru to advise him as to which one of the three portfolios of External Affairs, Home and Defence should be given to the Muslim League.
3. "As I told you, Mr. Jinnah has assured me that the Muslim League will come into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of co-operating. He regrets and condemns as deeply as you do the recent disturbances in Eastern Bengal." Wavell to Nehru, 23 October 1946.
4. "I have made it clear to Mr. Jinnah, whom I have seen today, that the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government is conditional on the acceptance of the scheme of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the statement of May 16th, and explained in the statement of May 25th, and that he must call his council at an early date to agree to this." Wavell to Nehru, 23 October 1946.
5. In response to a request by the Congress, the Sikh Panthic Board decided on 14 August 1946 that the Sikhs would enter the Constituent Assembly "when the opportunity comes", and also join the Interim Government.

ment of May 25th.[6] It is open to Mr. Jinnah or to any one else to accept that explanation and interpretation. So far as we are concerned we have made our position perfectly clear in this respect on many occasions both to the Cabinet Delegation and subsequently.[7] The Delegation's interpretation was not our interpretation of the statement of May 16th. A subsequent explanation cannot alter or enlarge a previous formal statement. We made it clear, however, that we would abide by the decision of the Federal Court in all such matters of interpretation. It was on this basis that we came into the Interim Government and were accepted as such. This position of ours remains unchanged.

5. I have drawn your attention previously to the misgivings caused, not only in our minds but also in the minds of large numbers of people all over India, by the recent speeches of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan which, so far as I know, have not been withdrawn or amended in any way. Both of these gentlemen are going to be our colleagues in the Interim Government and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan is a recognized leader of the Muslim League. Their speeches delivered at such a moment cannot but have serious repercussions. Made on the eve of their entry into the Interim Government and at a time when horrible things have been happening over large areas of East Bengal, they have a peculiar significance. My own experiences during my Frontier tour, which took place after the announcement of the entry of the Muslim League into the Interim Government, made me feel that there was no change in the approach of the Muslim League and that the old attitude persisted.

6. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, in a statement issued from Lahore on October 19th, stated that East Bengal happenings are part of the all-India battle for Pakistan.[8] What has happened and is happening in East Bengal is yet not

6. The statement of 25 May 1946, which was issued by the Cabinet Mission to clarify the statement of 16 May 1946, confirmed that "the scheme stands as a whole and can only succeed if it is accepted and worked in a spirit of cooperation". It also stated: "The interpretation put by the Congress resolution on paragraph 15 of the statement to the effect that the provinces can in the first instance make the choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed does not accord with the Delegation's intentions."

7. On 24 May 1946, the Congress Working Committee resolved that it read "paragraph 15 to mean that, in the first instance, the respective provinces shall make their choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed." The Committee reiterated its stand on 10 August 1946.

8. On 19 October 1946, Ghazanfar Ali Khan declared that Muslims would not submit to any government which did not include their true representatives. In the Interim Government the Muslim League would show that no government in India could function smoothly without its cooperation, and that it was the sole representative organisation of Muslims in India.

fully known. But I doubt very much if the reports sent by the Governor or the statement made in the British Parliament have much relation to facts. I have just read a report prepared by Mr. K.C. Neogy who is a competent observer and is himself a resident of East Bengal. In this report he says that "the lawlessness has been given the colour of pure goondaism, but it is not so. It is an organized attack engineered by the Muslim League and carried out with the active connivance of the administrative officials". He further points out that attacks have been made in military formation by people armed with guns and other deadly weapons. Roads have been dug up and other means of communication cut off to prevent ingress and egress. Canals have been blocked and strategic points are being guarded by armed insurgents. A *Statesman* report about the island of Sandwip says that "a section of it (the frenzied crowd) has been left behind to guard the 'occupied' areas in Noakhali District and to terrorise the 'subjects' by further acts of lawlessness in the event of defiance of this authority on the part of the people."

7. In view of the fact that many of the administrative officials are themselves involved in this lawlessness, it is not surprising that their reports should minimise the disturbances and give false accounts.

8. It may interest you to know that over a month ago I requested Mr. K.C. Neogy to become a delegate in our U.N.O. Delegation to America. He accepted it, but soon after he expressed his inability to go. The reason he gave me was that conditions in East Bengal were fast deteriorating and that a general attack on behalf of the Muslim League was expected in the near future. Mr. Neogy did not wish to leave his family in East Bengal when everybody there seemed to be expecting this mass attack. Numerous warnings of this came to all of us and, no doubt, the Government of Bengal must have known about it. Yet nothing was done to prevent it.

9. I understand that the situation in Calcutta is rapidly deteriorating. On the 25th of October a grand rally of the Muslim League national guards is going to be held in Calcutta. These guards are especially meant for the so-called direct action. To hold such a rally or conference of these guards at this juncture in Calcutta is distinctly odd. It has led to a great deal of apprehension in the minds of the population of the city and the possibility of another large-scale and organized attack in various parts of the city is feared.

10. It is with this background of past and present happenings and apprehensions for the future that we have to view any step that we might take today. Indeed every other step should be subordinated to the urgent need of putting an end to the horror in East Bengal. People there look helplessly towards the Interim Government expecting us to do something to relieve

them. What we can do I do not know, for we are told by you that this is your special responsibility. The army has gone there and will, no doubt, do good work. How far it can function properly, if it is hampered by local civil authority, I do not know. Again and again Bengal witnesses unparalleled horrors, and yet the same administrative machine and special responsibilities continue to function. How can people have any faith in something that has failed them so often before and in which they have lost confidence completely?

11. In these circumstances, when so many people hope for some effective relief from the Central Government, any handing over of the portfolios of Defence and Home to representatives of the Muslim League would give rise to very serious misgiving. There may or may not be justification for this, but the fact that there is this strongly-felt sentiment is patent, and we cannot ignore it. In all such matters, when fear seizes hold of large numbers of people and frightfulness reigns over wide areas, the psychological element is important. Hence we feel that it would be an entirely wrong step, leading to most unfortunate consequences, if any change was made in the portfolios of Defence and Home.

12. In regard to the portfolio of External Affairs, some similar considerations arise, especially after my recent visit to the tribal areas and my experiences there which have powerfully affected people all over the country. These are not personal matters, but have to be considered in their larger context and in connection with the possible consequences of any step that we might take.

13. It is for these reasons and others that we expressed our inability to have any change in the portfolios of Defence, Home and External Affairs, and we are unable to change our opinion.

14. We earnestly desire, however, that some way out should be found which will satisfy the conditions you have laid down. We do feel that if it is at all possible for us really to cooperate with the Muslim League in the Interim Government and elsewhere, we should make an earnest effort to do so. Because of this we have given the most careful thought to this matter and we have come to the conclusion that we should offer you the important and key portfolio of Finance to be given to the representatives of the Muslim League, should they so desire it. This is one of the four portfolios to which you have drawn our special attention and which in some ways has precedence over all others. You will realise our difficulties in making this suggestion. But we have balanced the advantages and disadvantages and are of opinion that these difficulties are less than those involved in a transfer of any of the remaining three portfolios mentioned by you.

15. As I have written to you previously, we are also prepared to have a change in the Commerce portfolio. I have mentioned these proposals to my colleagues who have so far been in charge of Finance and Commerce. They have naturally not been pleased at the idea of being uprooted from work to which they have given so much time and thought. But, in the larger interests, they have been good enough to agree to the proposed change.

16. If these proposals are accepted, certain consequential changes will have to be made in regard to some of the other portfolios. We shall consider them amongst ourselves as soon as I know what the decision is about these proposals.

17. I would have earnestly suggested to you, if it was possible to do so at this stage, that no dislocation should be caused in regard to the portfolios for at least a month or so. The Central Legislative Assembly is meeting on Monday next and it is obvious that any changes now would lead to a great deal of confusion in the work of the Assembly. It is eminently desirable, therefore, for all the present portfolios to continue as they are, except for the five that are vacant, and for changes to be considered after the Assembly session is over.

18. This procedure would obviate many difficulties and allow all of us sufficient time to adjust ourselves in the best possible way to the new conditions. It is for you to judge whether this is possible now.

19. I would like again to point out to you what I have stated earlier in this letter that it seems to us essential that even before the question of portfolios is considered, other matters should be cleared up. A premature step now without that clarification might well lead to new complications. The Interim Government can only function successfully on a basis of mutual understanding and team work. That means a clear acceptance of the statement of May 16th by the Muslim League and a definite assurance by them that there will be cooperation and team work, and all the members of the Interim Government will function as a Cabinet. If all this was made perfectly clear, other difficulties would not long remain.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

35. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
23 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have consulted my colleagues on the question of Honours. We are all of one mind in the matter. We are opposed to the conferment of Honours, both British Honours and so-called Indian Honours, on any Indian. Therefore no recommendation about Honours in regard to any Indians should be made this year. In regard to Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen or other non-Indians in service in India, recommendations for Honours may, however, be made this year.

This does not apply to military Honours for the Defence Services which may be continued, but civilian Honours are not to be included so far as Indians are concerned.

This whole question of Honours will have to be fully considered in future and definite rules laid down in regard to the receipt of any foreign Honour by an Indian or by anyone in service in India. Those rules, we feel sure, are going to be against the conferment of any such Honours, as has been done in Canada and some other British Dominions. Meanwhile for this year we are of opinion, as stated above, that no recommendations should be made for the conferment of Honours on any Indians.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. R/3/1/267, I.O.L.R., London. Not printed in *The Transfer of Power*.

36. To Lord Wavell[1]

October 24, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have just received your letter of today's date.[2] I hasten to write to you and tell you that your decision to take away the Home portfolio from Sardar

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 801.
2. In his letter of 24 October 1946, Wavell refused to accept any change in the Finance, Defence and External Affairs portfolios. He proposed to allot the Home portfolio to the Muslim League, assuring Nehru that he would insist upon the abandonment of the policy of direct action. This decision was said to be no reflection on Vallabhbhai Patel.

Patel and give it to the Muslim League is one which will lead to certain consequences which I have clearly indicated to you already. Sardar Patel told you personally and has told us that he would in that event resign from the Government. I take it that it is with full knowledge of this that you have taken your decision. We are in full agreement with Sardar Patel in this matter and we cannot continue in the Government without him.

I am writing to you immediately on receipt of your letter and without consulting my colleagues in regard to it. I shall do so this afternoon as the matter is of the utmost consequence. But I have little doubt about their views on this subject which we have already discussed very fully.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

37. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
October 24th, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have received your second letter of today's date.[2] I have consulted my colleagues and they agree with what I wrote to you early this afternoon. We cannot continue in the Government if a decision is imposed upon us against our will, as suggested by you. We would not have attached importance to the allocation of portfolios but for the implications and circumstances which I have already mentioned and which compel us to do so.

Two months ago I was asked to form the Interim Government and I undertook that responsibility. This was done as a result of all the talks and negotiations which preceded it with the concurrence of H.M.G. Now that a crisis has arisen which is leading to our resignations and the termination of this Government, I think H.M.G. should be fully informed of all developments. It is due to them that they should know the background of events here. I am glad therefore that you are referring the matter to them. I have tried to explain our position to you in my two letters dated 23rd October. These letters may be sent on to H.M.G.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 803-804.
2. "I shall be very sorry if you and your colleagues decide to take so serious a decision. If it is to be so, I shall have to report the matter at once to H.M.G. and ask them to reconsider the whole situation." Wavell to Nehru, 24 October 1946.

38. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
25th October, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have consulted my colleagues about the change in portfolios and we are of opinion that these should be distributed as follows :

Industries & Supplies	......	Dr. John Matthai
Education & Arts	......	Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Works, Mines & Power	......	Mr. Bhabha

The other portfolios held by present Members will remain where they are.
May I suggest that a meeting of the Cabinet be held tomorrow morning in order to consider more specially the adjournment motions and other agenda for the Central Assembly?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 805.

39. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
25th October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have been trying to telephone to you for some time without success. Something has apparently gone wrong with our telephone.
I have consulted my colleagues with reference to our conversation today.[2] They regret they are unable to alter their decision of this morning. They feel strongly that this would be unfair to all of us and discourteous to those who had agreed to give up the portfolios they had so far held. If, however, we have to reconsider the whole matter afresh then Finance should remain

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 805-806.
2. At a meeting with Nehru on 25 October 1946, Wavell stated that he was committed to giving the portfolio of Works, Mines and Power to the Muslim League, and suggested that C.H. Bhabha be allotted the Posts and Air or the Health portfolio.

with Dr. Matthai. Otherwise the arrangement made this morning, which I communicated to you in writing, should remain unchanged.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

40. To Liaquat Ali Khan[1]

New Delhi
27 October 1946

Dear Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan,
I am sorry you were unable to come here this morning. It was necessary for all the Members of the Cabinet to meet together and consider the programme and procedure at the Assembly meeting tomorrow so that we could all be quite clear in our minds about it. We have been discussing this, but we should like a further discussion in which all of us can take part. We are, therefore, having a meeting tomorrow morning, October 28th, at 9 .30 a.m. in my room, i.e. No. 10 in the Council House. I hope this will give us some time to decide upon our course of action for the Assembly which meets at 11.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L. Identical letters were sent to Ismail Chundrigar, Abdur Rab Nishtar and Ghazanfar Ali Khan.

41. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
30 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I must apologise to you for not keeping my appointment this morning. I wanted particularly to meet you and to discuss some matters of importance. But something happened to me which does not usually happen. Various factors combined together with accumulated fatigue of mind and body

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 835-837.

knocked me over last night. There is nothing much the matter with me, but for the moment I have been disabled from attending to my work.

2. These last few days have brought with them a great deal of mental strain. We formed the Interim Government with a particular object in view. If that object recedes into the background, then no particular purpose is served by our continuing in the Government. You will remember that at every stage of our talks, and more especially when we were discussing the question of portfolios, I laid the greatest stress on the paramount importance of the Government functioning as a team and as a Cabinet. Everything else was subsidiary to this. During this week, however, new difficulties have arisen and it has been stated openly by our new colleagues in the Government that they do not subscribe to this approach of ours.[2] Care has been taken not even to use the word Cabinet which is now the official designation.[3] Our usual practice of meeting together informally almost every day has not been accepted by our new colleagues. Indeed they have deliberately said that they would rather not meet us in that way. They are only prepared to meet individuals as individuals.

3. Other statements have been made which seem to indicate an entirely different approach. So far as we are concerned, we have endeavoured to say or do nothing which might come in the way of mutual understanding and joint work. It is just possible that after some days there might be more of a spirit of accommodation and cooperation. It is equally possible that this may not happen. In the latter contingency, our position in the Cabinet will become increasingly difficult, for on no account are we prepared to function there as a group facing a rival group. I think, therefore, that I owe it to you to let you know that if circumstances do not shape themselves favourably, we may not find it possible to continue in the Government.

4. This possibility is not merely based on the attitude of our new colleagues, but also on a number of other factors to which I have drawn your attention from time to time. We feel that the attitude of H.M.G. has been rather frigid to us and has chiefly consisted in our being reminded, through you, of special responsibilities with which we have nothing to do,[4] even though

2. On 26 October 1946, Liaquat Ali Khan declared: "Joint and collective responsibility is a constitutional term that is used in constitutional law and practice. There is under the present Government of India Act no such thing as collective or joint responsibility. ...There is no such thing as leadership of the Government by one individual...."
3. On 10 September 1946, Wavell wrote to Pethick-Lawrence: "My colleagues wish to speak of the Council as a 'Cabinet' and there seems no great objection to this, though official orders must of course still issue from the 'Governor-General-in-Council'."
4. See *ante*, item 37, fn. 2.

vast numbers of our people suffer horror and torment. The attitude of some Governors has also been unfortunate.

5. Sardar Patel has already informed you of the decision of the U.P. Prime Minister to resign from office unless the present Inspector-General of Police goes. There is no room for further argument about this matter. The only thing is as to whether the wishes of the U.P. Cabinet or of the U.P. Governor shall prevail. If the latter happens, then the U.P. Cabinet cannot function any more. This should be clearly understood.

6. I sent you a few days ago a copy of a note which I had written on my Frontier tour.[5] This relates to my own department and I am particularly concerned. There were many questions about my Frontier tour in the Assembly yesterday. I tried to avoid any commitments. But I had to assure the House that there would be some kind of an inquiry which would necessarily relate to the conduct of some officers of the Political Service in the Frontier areas. In my note I mentioned one glaring case which needed no inquiry of any kind. It is essential that proper steps should be taken to deal with these matters in the Frontier, or else my position as head of this department becomes impossible.

7. In the agenda for the Cabinet today there is the question of the Joint Consultative Committee for the States. It seems to me that the proposal, as drafted, requires further consideration and possibly changes.

8. In the course of your correspondence with Mr. Jinnah, which has been recently published, you stated that you were prepared to offer the Deputy Chairmanship of the Cabinet Coordination Committee to a representative of the Muslim League in the Cabinet. That offer was made in a particular context and I take it that it does not apply now. I would not be agreeable to any change in the Deputy Chairmanship at this stage when even the conception of joint Cabinet working is not accepted. Certain changes in the composition of the C.C.C. will have to be made. I suggest that, apart from you and me, the following persons should form the C.C.C. :—the Home Member, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel; the Industries and Supplies Member, Dr. John Matthai; the Education Member, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari; the Finance Member, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan; and another representative of the Muslim League according to their choice.

9. I must apologise to you again for falling ill when I have no business to do so.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. See *post*, section 5, item 21.

42. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

I had an interview with Nehru and Liaquat yesterday evening. I urged on them the necessity for three measures to deal with the present dangerous situation.

(a) Effective control of press
(b) Support by provincial ministries of officials and police in place of constant criticism
(c) Formation of coalition ministries in provinces.

2. At mention of coalitions in provinces Nehru suddenly blew up in characteristic fashion and denied the existence of a Coalition at the Centre since the Muslim League Members declined to recognise him as *de facto* Premier or to attend his daily "Cabinet meetings". I reminded him of the constitutional position, whereupon he proffered his resignation. I took no notice of this or of its subsequent repetition and told him that I was quite willing that my colleagues should meet outside the Cabinet for informal discussion as and when they liked but I could not recognise such meetings as official or his position as Vice-President as being that of a Premier. I pointed out the existence of Committees of Cabinet for discussion of business concerning several departments and suggested that they should be used.

3. Liaquat remained calm and said that Muslim League Members had every intention of cooperating in Central Cabinet and that League was quite prepared to discuss coalitions in provinces provided that it was general. But League Members did not recognise Nehru as Premier and had come in to work existing constitution.

4. Nehru eventually calmed down. I am told that he had a very rough passage from some of his supporters in Bihar and he is obviously in highly nervous condition. I do not think he meant his threat of resignation seriously. But I have had several previous threats and I think it is quite likely that sooner or later Congress may force an issue by resigning and calling out their Ministries.

5. I cannot tell yet whether the present disturbances will die down or spread but whole country is in highly inflammable state and we must be prepared for further trouble. It is therefore essential that H.M.G. should make up its mind on policy in event of a breakdown.

1. 10 November 1946. Telegram from Wavell to Secretary of State, 11 November 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 41-42.

43. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
11 November 1946

My dear Krishna,
I have not written to you for many days although there was a great deal to tell. But conditions here have been rather overwhelming in many ways, and I have found it impossible to write. I do not propose to discuss all that is happening in India. It is pretty bad. As somebody has described it, many parts of India are in a state of spontaneous combustion. Murder stalks the streets and the most amazing cruelties are indulged in both by the individual and the mob. It is extraordinary how our peaceful population has become militant and blood-thirsty.

2. It is easy enough to trace the causes and to see how one thing has led to another. The Muslim League's gospel of hatred and preaching of violence has succeeded beyond their expectations and in a way which they had probably not thought of. The Calcutta killing led to the horrors of Noakhali, and Noakhali then led to an orgy of murder in Bihar. Meanwhile life in considerable parts of India is pretty cheap and we expect to hear news of some riot or other every day. Riot is not the word for it—it is just a sadistic desire to kill.

3. It was extraordinary for me to see the simple, peaceful and likable peasantry of Bihar behaving as they did. They had done something dreadful and yet, simple folk as they were, they desisted rapidly enough when told to do so. Not so at Noakhali where another kind of terror has reigned for some months now.

4. All this, of course, comes very much in the way of every other activity. Personally I have been out of Delhi for two weeks during the last three. Work piles up here and the Assembly is sitting.

5. Ever since the coming in of the Muslim League a very difficult situation has arisen and it faces us continually. These people are bent on mischief and give us a deal of trouble. Of course their capacity for giving trouble is largely conditioned by the sympathy and help they receive from other sources.

6. The result of all this is that all our plans are affected. We can get many things through by majority, but it is not easy to do this with everything.

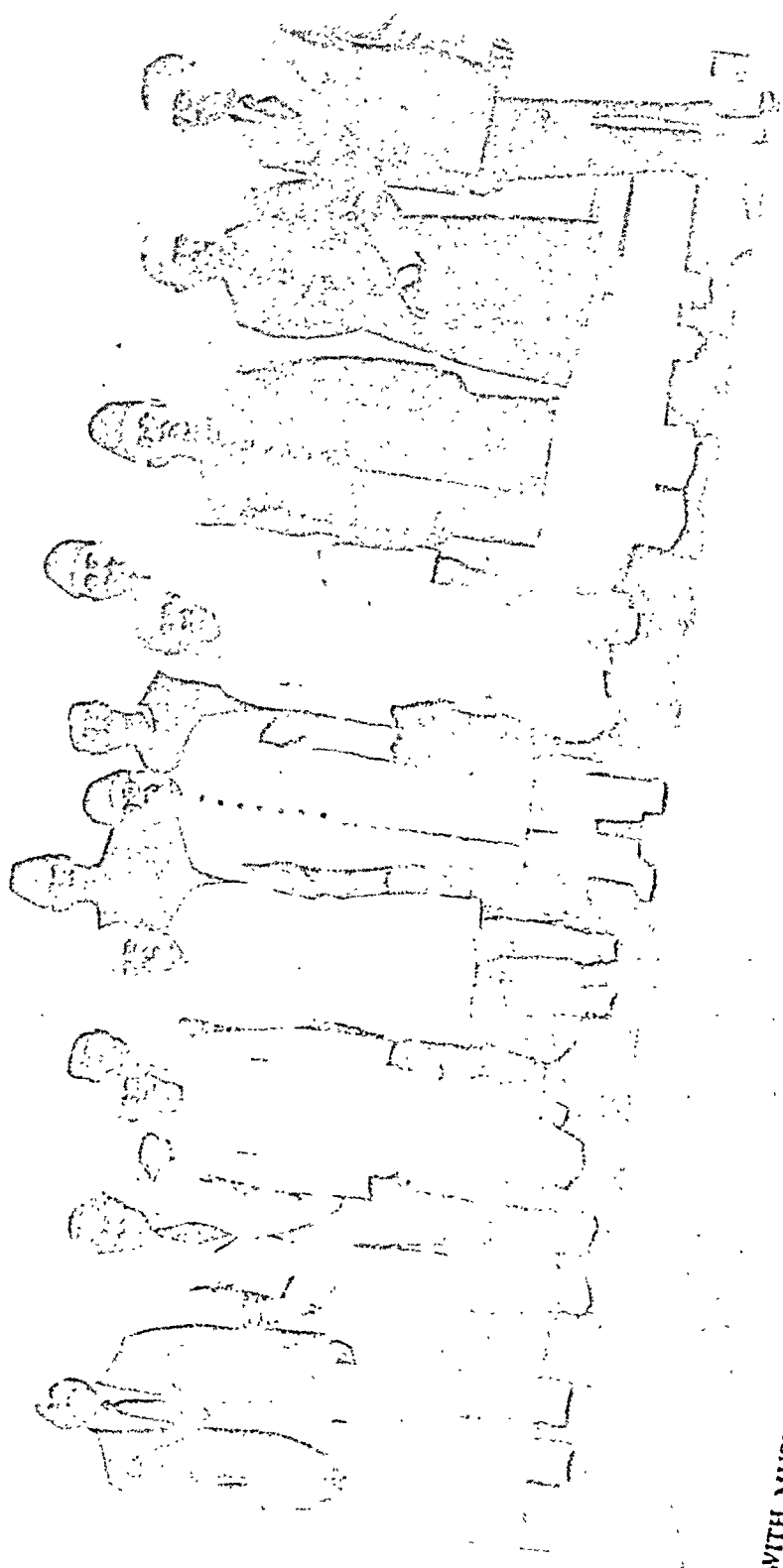
1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

The whole conception of joint working and of trying to eliminate Viceregal interference has suffered.

7. You wrote to me of the importance of the office of the High Commissioner in London. Of course I realise that. But the High Commissioner's office works under the Commerce Member who is now a Muslim Leaguer. It is very difficult to get things done as one wants to in these circumstances. I am not raising the question of the High Commissioner yet and I want to see how things shape themselves. But it will have to be raised some time or other. I do not think it is desirable for me to suggest your name for many reasons. As it is, there is unfortunately a good deal of prejudice and I do not want your name to be bandied about in this connection and become a disputed issue. We shall have to make a second best choice.

8. About your visit to Russia too there has been a good deal of argument and some opposition. Various viewpoints are put forward from various motives. One suggestion is that now that a non-official approach has already been made by you to Molotov,[2] a formal and official approach should be made by a representative of the Government of India, preferably one who is in the Political Service and who is supposed to have experience of the technique and details attaching to diplomatic appointments. Another suggestion is that you should go to Moscow accompanied by a senior member of our service. The Muslim League Members, of course, do not like this at all and will oppose it. Some of our own people are rather confused and doubtful. In this state of affairs it is not easy to take the action one desires to. I cannot explain everything in the course of this letter. I want you to appreciate, however, that there are many difficulties in the way here at present. You will probably get telegrams from me which may surprise you to some extent because you will not know all the background here. I hope, however, that you will appreciate that I am doing the best I can in the circumstances.

9. There is also a proposal that you should be appointed as an official representative of the Government of India to explore possibilities of diplomatic relations with some European countries. The idea is much the same as you had, except that instead of being a kind of personal representative of mine you become a representative of the Government of India. This personal representative business is criticized by many people and is too novel and

2. The new Government had sent a message to Molotov to open relations with the Soviet Union, and Krishna Menon, as a personal representative of Nehru, met him at Paris on 28 September 1946. He asked Molotov what assistance the Soviet people could give to India in the existing food crisis.

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unprecedented for people to understand it.[3] If you become the Government of India's representative for this purpose, you may or may not continue to work in an honorary capacity. That would be partly for you to decide. I do not know which you would prefer though you gave me the impression that you would rather work in an honorary capacity.

10. I am writing to you more or less briefly today just to give you some idea of our difficulties and to prepare your mind for possible developments. I shall try to write to you more later.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

3. Replying from New York on 23 November 1946, Krishna Menon held the newspapers in America responsible for playing up the term "personal representative" and wrote, "I have not asked any one to use it and in the case of the *Herald Tribune* did actually protest about it. So if any one tells you to the contrary they are either ignorant or mischievous."

44. Note on the Entry of Foreigners into India[1]

This matter was considered by the Cabinet and it was decided to postpone further consideration to allow E.A.D. and Home Department to confer together and arrive at agreed conclusions. When this has been done the matter will again be placed before the Cabinet, probably sometime next month.

2. It has been suggested that the approach to this question might be somewhat different than the one so far taken. It is obvious that it is desirable to prevent or restrict the admission into India of undesirable foreigners. The Home Department has put up a note showing that their past experience with various types of people has been far from happy. They mention especially Arab, Iraqi and Iranian traders. They say that Iraqi Jews have been notorious for their black-market activities in Bombay. The Arabs have often indulged

1. 13 November 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 202(15)-P/46(Part I), pp. 12-14/notes, National Archives of India.

in smuggling activities. Iraqi and Arab horse-dealers have also given trouble and the Western India Turf Club have decided that there will be no more races for Arab horses of a certain class in the Western India. The restaurant trade in Bombay has suffered also because of the large numbers of Iranians. Their advent has added to the food and accommodation difficulties in Bombay and, in May 1945, the Government of Bombay approached the Government of India and asked them to impose more restrictions on Iranians, which was done.

3. There are many other instances of undesirable activities of foreigners in India. It is obvious that an attempt should be made, as effective as possible, to prevent the entry into India of those who might indulge in such activities, and, in case they manage to come in, to have power to deport them.

4. During the War various restrictions were in force.[2] Many of those restrictions cannot and should not continue now and the whole policy has got to be reviewed. In laying down rules and regulations for the entry of foreigners, it seems undesirable for any particular nationality to be discriminated against as such. This is likely to create ill-will in the nation concerned. To presume that a particular nation contains far more evil-doers than another nation is neither justified nor politically sound. This will create ill-will in that nation for India. It is suggested, therefore, that no nationality as such should be banned nor should any particular rule apply to the nationals of any country. Rules should be made to apply to a particular type of individuals who are suspected of mischief. The rules thus should be as liberal as possible in their general application but the Home Department should have full powers to keep out such persons as it considers dangerous to public order and security.

5. Thus general rules should be framed without reference to any nationality and laying down directions for the issue of passports and visas. These general rules should have a rule empowering the Home Department, if necessary with the consultation of E.A.D., to make such other rules or regulations from time to time as may be necessary to deal with a particular type of evil-doers.

2. Before the Second World War very little control was exercised by the Government of India over the granting of visas, the British authorities abroad having a wide discretion in this matter. But, during the war, the grant of visas for India was strictly controlled and, barring a few excepted classes, prior approval of the Government of India was required to all visas for India.

6. It is not clear to me why ex-enemy foreigners should be banned completely as has been done by the Government.[3] No danger can be apprehended from them now either from the point of view of security or trade. This is a merely punitive measure which appears to have no other significance. All that is necessary is that applications for visas from ex-enemy foreigners should be approved of by the Home Department.

7. In the previous summary Russians, Chinese and other nationalities are put in a class apart to whom visas should not be granted without prior reference. This, as I have stated above, is discrimination against some nations which will naturally be resented. We are trying to develop friendly relations with China and it seems odd that we should prevent the Chinese from coming to India except on official or very special business.

8. It is also odd that we should advertise in the various parts of the world to attract tourists to India and at the same time consider them as undesirable persons to be kept out.[4] Normally a tourist traffic is encouraged by every nation.

9. Transit visas are everywhere normally granted without any difficulty and it seems an infliction to ask each applicant to satisfy the authorities of his personal record.

10. Generally speaking the passport and visa regulations might be liberalised so as to attract a desirable type of foreigners to visit India. The undesirable type should, as far as possible, be stopped and rules should be framed to apply to him and not generally to large numbers of other people.

11. This is just a brief note for the consideration of the E.A.D. and Home Department. As I have suggested above, the main rules should be general in nature. Separate specific rules should be drawn up applying to persons we consider undesirable. These latter would be framed under the authority given to the Home Department by the general rules.

12. If E.A.D. and Home Department will consider this subject a little further on the lines I have suggested, we can then meet together to discuss it.

3. The Home Department proposed to maintain the ban which had been imposed in September 1945 on the entry into India of ex-enemy nationals, save in certain exceptional cases. The ex-enemy nationals included Germans, Romanians, Hungarians, Finns, Bulgarians, Italians, Japanese and Siamese.
4. Owing to the difficult economic, transport and accommodation conditions in India, the Home Department intended to refuse visas to tourists for the time being.

45. To Lord Wavell[1]

Meerut (Camp)
21st November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I should like to draw your attention to a leading article in *Dawn* of November 21st on the Constituent Assembly. *Dawn* is supposed to be the organ of the Muslim League. In the course of this article it says in regard to the Constituent Assembly : "Its (the Muslim League's) decision of boycott taken on July 29 at Bombay is still undoubtedly in force; and its participation in the Interim Government was not made conditional on a rescinding of that decision. On this point the League scored a triumph which to some extent compensated it for the setback it had received due to the Cabinet Mission's earlier misinterpretation of paragraph 8 of their statement of June 16.[2] If the League adheres to its decision to stay out of the Constituent Assembly, while sharing power in the Interim Government, there is no authority that can prevent it from doing so."

This is a clear statement of the League's position. We had been repeatedly told that acceptance of the so-called short-term plan, that is entry into the Interim Government, was dependent on an acceptance of the long-term plan, that is the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16th. If the Muslim League refuse to accept the long-term plan, it is not at all clear to me how they can function in the Interim Government. I shall be grateful if you will kindly clear this matter up. This question will arise in various ways in the course of the next two or three weeks.

It seems to me clear, and indeed it is stated on behalf of the Muslim League, that they have deliberately avoided committing themselves to anything at all in regard to any matter. While we were assured by you that they were committed, in fact it was not so. It is for you to consider whether you were misled or not.[3] We were certainly misled by what you assured us.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 124-125.
2. Jinnah's interpretation of paragraph 8 of the Cabinet Mission's statement that, should the Congress reject the Interim Government proposals and the League accept them, the Government would be formed by members of the Muslim League only, was rejected by Wavell on 28 June 1946 as incorrect.
3. Wavell replied to Nehru's letter on 26 November 1946: "As I told you in my letter of the 23rd October, which has now been published, I made it clear to Mr. Jinnah that the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government was conditional on the acceptance of the statement of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the Statement of May 16th and explained in the Statement of May 25th, and that he must call his council at an early date to agree to this. There is no question of my having withdrawn this condition, or having misled you in any way."

It is not possible to carry on any harmonious work on the basis of misunderstandings. It is quite possible that there will be future misunderstandings on assurances or commitments which actually do not exist. I should like to avoid this and hence my desire for clarity on all these issues. That will enable all of us to determine our future course of action.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

46. To Lord Wavell[1]

21 November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of the 20th November regarding the proposal to send Krishna Menon to some European countries and K.P.S. Menon to Moscow. Since my talk with you on this subject[2] I have given considerable thought to this matter. The more I think of it the more extraordinary it appears.

This question arose because of my desire to explore possibilities of developing diplomatic relations with various European countries. The idea was that this should be done informally at first, more specially in the case of Russia. On receipt of a report about these informal approaches subsequent action could have been decided upon on an official level. Krishna Menon seemed to me a very suitable person for this kind of work and as he happened to be in India then I discussed it with him. Soon after his return to England the matter was considered in the External Affairs Department and it was then proposed to authorise him to visit a number of European countries as well as Russia for this purpose. He was to make no commitments on our behalf but just to report to us by January next. We intended sending him a full brief as to how he should proceed in the matter.

While this matter was being considered by us, the question of getting some food from Russia became an urgent one and we sent the request by telegram to Moscow. This was repeated to Krishna Menon who was asked to deliver it personally to Molotov in Paris. The result of his interview with

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 122-124.
2. In his interview with Nehru on 19 November 1946, Wavell had questioned the decision to send Krishna Menon on a tour of European countries without first discussing the matter with the Muslim League.

Molotov did not yield food at present but was otherwise very satisfactory. It was agreed that he should visit Moscow for further conversations. This successful approach encouraged me still more to pursue this method of informal approach in various countries. Subsequently Krishna Menon was appointed an alternate delegate in the Indian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly. He has had occasion in New York to meet Molotov repeatedly and I have been informed that the invitation to visit Moscow has been repeated. He has met a number of other diplomatic representatives from various countries and the result of his conversations has been satisfactory.

These conversations and invitations must now be followed up as soon as possible and the next step is naturally for Krishna Menon to visit some of these countries including Russia. All this would have been on the informal plane to be followed up later by official approaches and final decisions on our part. My department, however, thought that it might be preferable to make the official approach to Russia now, leaving it to Krishna Menon to go to some other European countries for the informal talks. This is the proposal which was to have been put up before the Cabinet. If it is preferred, I am quite agreeable to Krishna Menon going to Russia also, and for the official approach to Russia to follow later. This would fit in with Molotov's invitation.

There has been great delay in sending instructions to Krishna Menon in New York and future arrangements are suffering because of this. I was anxious therefore for a speedy decision. There was no necessity for this matter to be put up before the Cabinet as it was of an exploratory nature. But I decided to consult the Cabinet before taking any further step.

I was surprised at what you told me the other day in regard to this matter. I do not understand the communal problem interfering with any such activities on our behalf. Your suggestion that I should consult Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan about it is still more surprising. I have told you previously that I find it difficult to function in the Government when some Members of the Government are not even agreeable to normal consultations and insist on keeping themselves apart as a bloc. This matter will necessarily have to be gone into and clarified. The present situation is highly unsatisfactory and I doubt if any Government can function in this way unless it is a static Government doing little or nothing. What is worse is the conception underlying it of two blocs inside the Cabinet functioning more or less independently except on formal occasions. This is entirely opposed to my conception and to what we have put to you repeatedly. Indeed it was made very clear by me and accepted by you, on the occasion of the Muslim League Members coming into the Cabinet, that the Cabinet would have to work as a team. It was on this basis that we agreed. Otherwise I would certainly not have agreed to any change in the Cabinet.

It now appears not only that the Muslim League Members are going to function as a separate bloc but that you wish to encourage them to do so. If any matter arises it is referred to Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and me as if we represent two different blocs. And now you ask me to consult Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan in a matter which concerns my department and has absolutely nothing to do with him except in so far as he is one of the Members of Government. I am unable to accept this procedure.

This question raises much wider issues which I should like you to consider. We are likely to face this issue in various forms again and again and the sooner a decision is arrived at the better.

I feel that various assurances given to us at the time of the formation of the Interim Government have gradually faded away and a definite attempt has been made to change the whole character of the Government as it was envisaged when you asked me to form it in August last. I accepted your invitation then and requested you to announce publicly that you had asked me to do so. It was only then that I took any further step. The present position is obviously entirely different and, as I have mentioned to you, it is a matter for the most serious consideration for us as to what we should do in these altered circumstances.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

47. To Lord Wavell[1]

Meerut (Camp)
22nd November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

Some of my colleagues and I feel that certain extracts from the correspondence that has passed between us in October last should be published. These relate to matters being discussed now. Your correspondence with Mr. Jinnah has already appeared in the press. It would be fit and proper to publish these extracts also in order to place the true facts before the public. The extracts I have chosen are enclosed on separate sheets. The first one is from a letter from you to Mr. Jinnah dated 4th October 1946. This has already been published. The others are :—

(i) Paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 of my letter to you dated 14th October 1946.

1. R/3/1/119A, I.O.L.R., London. Not printed in *The Transfer of Power.*

(ii) Your letter to me dated 15th October 1946.
(iii) Paragraphs 3, 6, 7 and 8 of my letter to you dated 23rd October 1946.
(iv) Paragraphs 3 and 4 of your letter to me dated 23rd October 1946.

Some of these letters, out of which these extracts have been taken, are long and deal with other matters. I have therefore not thought it worthwhile to have the complete correspondence published. But of course if you think it would be better to give the letters as a whole, I have no objection. This would necessitate the publication of other letters also as otherwise the references would not be understood.[2]

I shall be grateful for an early answer. I shall telephone to your Private Secretary tomorrow morning before midday.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. The extracts as indicated by Nehru were published in the newspapers on 24 November 1946 with the following note by him: "Certain correspondence between the Viceroy and Mr. M.A. Jinnah was published about three weeks ago. This related to the participation of the members of the Muslim League in the Cabinet. A number of letters bearing on the subject and more specially on the terms of the Muslim League's participation in the Interim Government were exchanged between the Viceroy and myself. Some extracts from these letters are now released to the Press for public information."

48. Rejoinder to Liaquat Ali Khan[1]

I have no desire to enter into a controversy with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan in regard to my remarks at the Subjects Committee and his public statement.[2] What I said was not a personal grievance against him or any other of my

1. 22 November 1946. Printed in *The Hindu*, 24 November 1946.
2. Replying to Nehru's charge that the Muslim League was the "King's Party", Liaquat Ali said on 22 November 1946: "If Pandit Nehru's discomfiture is due to the fact that the Muslim League bloc has refused to recognise the fiction of his leadership of the Government, then I can only sympathise with him."

colleagues in the Interim Government. It referred to a policy publicly proclaimed by the Muslim League.[3] It has been repeated on many occasions that the Muslim League and their representatives in the Interim Government have not formed a coalition. Also that there is no Cabinet. Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan should know that the present Government is officially called a Cabinet and has been functioning as such till he and his colleagues came in. It is still officially termed a Cabinet whatever the Government of India Act may say about it. Also if it is not a coalition it is just an aggregate of groups and individuals. No Government can continue on this basis for long and any such attempt to prevent the Cabinet functioning must necessarily increase the power and influence of the Governor-General.

Whatever the intention of the Muslim League may be their policy inevitably makes them a kind of King's party. This is not a personal matter in so far as I am concerned but a public matter of grave importance. It has also been made clear on behalf of the Muslim League that they do not accept the Cabinet Mission statement of May 16.[4] It was on the explicit basis of that statement that they were asked to come into this Government and we were informed by the Viceroy accordingly.

If definite assurances are set aside and the very basis of joining and functioning in the Government is ignored it becomes increasingly difficult to place reliance on the plighted word and to function jointly. The Congress undertook to form the Government on certain definite assurances and understandings, more especially that the Government would function as nearly as possible as a Dominion Government and there would be no interference from outside. Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan places reliance on the Government of India Act or something previous to it. In other words he does not want to enlarge the freedom of the Government but to restrict it and is, therefore, completely in line with the desires of the representatives of the British Government.

3. On 14 November 1946, Jinnah argued that the Interim Government was neither a cabinet nor a coalition but merely the Executive Council of the Governor-General formed under the Government of India Act of 1919.
4. "No representative of the Muslim League will participate in the Constituent Assembly and the Bombay Resolution of the Muslim League Council passed on July 29 stands." Jinnah on 21 November 1946.

49. To John Colville[1]

New Delhi
19th December 1946

Dear Sir John,[2]
I write to confirm what I told you informally the other day that our nominee for the Cabinet to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Asaf Ali's appointment as Ambassador in the United States[3] is Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. I trust that you will kindly take the necessary steps for his appointment as a Member of the Cabinet.

It will be necessary to arrange for a distribution of portfolios. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad would prefer the portfolio of Education. This will involve some changes. About this I shall write to you later.

We have not fixed any date yet for Mr. Asaf Ali's departure for America. I hope that when all other preliminaries have been completed we might fix this date as well as the date for Maulana Azad to assume charge of his office. Probably this will be some time early in January.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Sir (David) John Colville (1894-1954); served in the War, 1914-18; Financial Secretary to the Treasury, 1936-38; Secretary of State for Scotland, 1938-40; Governor of Bombay, March 1943 to January 1948; acted as Viceroy and Governor-General of India four times in 1945, 1946 and 1947.
3. Asaf Ali was appointed as the first Indian Ambassador to U.S.A. on 6 December 1946.

50. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

1. Nehru proposes that Azad should take the portfolio of Education, Dr. Matthai Railways and Rajagopalachari go back to Industries and Supplies. He did not take at all kindly to the suggestion that he should discuss the redistribution with Liaquat Ali. I said that I would think the matter over.

2. Nehru also did not react very favourably to the proposal for a Sub-Committee to recommend names for posts abroad. This part of the discussion ended in my saying that I could not agree to recommend to His Majesty's Government his proposal for the Indian Agent-General in Ceylon (Raghavan).

1. 1 January 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 438-439.

3. Nehru then attacked the Muslim League Members of the Government on the usual lines, for noncooperation. He instanced Liaquat's proposal to reopen the question of the salt tax[2] and a decision recently taken by the Finance Department about the value of the rupee,[3] without consulting the Cabinet.

Nehru then worked himself up into a denunciation of His Majesty's Government; he said the decision taken in London had not been fair to Congress;[4] that His Majesty's Government's stock in India was down to zero so far as Congress was concerned; and that if they had done nothing for the last three or four months (i.e., if they had given a full liberty of action to Congress), things would have been much better. I said that His Majesty's Government were doing their best to try and keep a united India, and Nehru burst out that he would sooner India was divided into a hundred parts than that they should in any way abandon their principles and give in to the Muslim League.

I kept emphasising the point that they could not possibly get an agreed constitution for India without Muslim cooperation, and it was essential from their point of view that Congress should get the Muslim League into the Constituent Assembly, that the only way of doing so was to accept His Majesty's Government's statement of December 6th.

4. I then spoke about the speeches of Jayaprakash Narayan, and said that it is an impossible position for a member of the Congress Working Committee to make such speeches. Did Congress approve them and if not what were they going to do about it? Nehru said that Congress did not approve his speeches, which were irresponsible and that he had resigned from Congress; but that his speeches did represent a very great and growing feeling of resentment against His Majesty's Government.

5. I then asked about the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on January 20th and the proposed programme. It was, I gathered, simply to clear up

2. A few days before the Muslim League joined the Interim Government, the Interim Government had decided at the meeting of the Cabinet to abolish the salt tax. This was done to fulfil Mahatma Gandhi's pledge and was expected to serve as the first tangible indication to the people of India of the *de facto* transfer of power to a popular government.
3. The decision of the Government of India not to change the par value of the rupee was announced on 11 December 1946.
4. On 6 December 1946, the British Government declared that, according to the Cabinet Mission's plan, decisions in the sections would be by simple majority vote. They urged the Congress to accept this view and suggested that it could be referred, along with other questions of interpretation, to the Federal Court by the Constituent Assembly.

the business postponed from the original meeting, i.e., the resolution about a Republic and the various Committees.

6. I mentioned the question of a lump sum grant to the Afridis. His attitude was that the money would be much better spent on schools and hospitals, but that he would consider it.

Nehru's attitude generally was inclined to be one of rather sullen resentment that His Majesty's Government had changed their attitude of unqualified support to Congress. He said that the whole attitude of the Muslim League was based on their knowledge that His Majesty's Government would support them to the end. I merely said that the Muslim League took entirely the opposite view and thought that His Majesty's Government had given unqualified support to Congress.

51. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
5 January 1947

Dear Lord Wavell,

Thank you for your letter of the 4th January which I have just received.

2. I would suggest that the changes mentioned in your letter[2] should take place about the end of the week. This will give a few days to the persons concerned to wind up the work they are doing and to prepare themselves otherwise for the new portfolios. I understand that both Dr. Matthai and Mr. Rajagopalachari are working at some schemes and it may result in some delay and confusion if they suddenly leave them.

3. Mr. Asaf Ali is also trying to finish as soon as possible some work in his department. Maulana Azad has been unwell for some time,[3] but he is recovering and I hope he will be well enough by the end of the week.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 693(19)GG/43/1946, p. 25, President's Secretariat; also available in J.N. Collection.
2. In his letter of 4 January 1947, Wavell agreed to Nehru's proposal that Abul Kalam Azad should take over the Education portfolio, Matthai Railways, and C. Rajagopalachari Industries and Supplies, and suggested that the changes be made immediately.
3. Maulana Azad was ill with influenza.

52. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
23 January 1947

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of 19 January regarding the formation of committees of the Cabinet to consider certain appointments in India and appointments of representatives abroad.[2] As the suggestion involves a complete departure from the practice hitherto pursued, it deserves careful consideration.

Normally, it would be desirable to have committees of the Cabinet to deal with various functions and appointment committee or committees might facilitate business. In the present state of affairs, we have, unfortunately, to face a difficulty. The Cabinet itself does not work as a team and any committee appointed would, likewise, suffer from the same disability.

In your letter you say that the Appointments Committee would advise you in regard to appointments. It is not quite clear what this means. I understand that Sardar Patel's suggestion was that selection by a board or committee would be considered by the Member in charge and thereafter the proposal would go for final decision to the Committee of the Cabinet. Thus the decision would rest with the Cabinet Committee and would not require approval or sanction by you before it took effect.

In regard to foreign appointments, a certain uniformity of policy is obviously necessary and care has to be taken that secrecy is maintained till the appointment is jointly announced by the two countries concerned. There must be a capacity to cooperate with each other among the persons so appointed.

In the committees you have suggested two names are common to both, although the departments of these two Members are not particularly associated with such appointments. So far as appointments abroad are concerned, the three departments concerned are External Affairs, Commonwealth Relations and Commerce. I must confess that the proposal to form these committees for appointments at present and without much further elucidation does not appeal to me. One fact at least should be made clear, whether these committees are the final authority in the matter or not.

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 4, pp. 475-476.
2. Acting upon Patel's suggestion, Wavell proposed on 19 January 1947 that two committees be appointed to assist him in selecting personal appointments in the Government of India, and representational posts abroad. He suggested that while two members, Liaquat Ali Khan and Matthai, were to be common to both, Vallabhbhai Patel should be included in the committee for home appointments, and Nehru in the committee for posts abroad.

Recently my department suggested a name for appointment as our representative in Ceylon. You have expressed your disapproval of this name. I understand that this is a rather unusual procedure and it puts me in difficulty. The name had been put forward by my department of their own accord. I approved of it also because of my long personal acquaintance with the person concerned. It is difficult for me to make my suggestions if they are to be overruled in this manner.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

53. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
31 January 1947

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have been giving careful consideration to the proposal that Cabinet committees might be appointed to consider and decide upon higher appointments in India as well as abroad. I have consulted some of my colleagues also on this subject.

2. In your letter of 19 January you suggested the appointment of two such committees. On 23 January I sent you a reply in which I pointed out certain difficulties, more specially in regard to appointments to representational posts abroad. I think there is a difference in regard to appointments in India and abroad. The former could more easily be made by a Cabinet committee, though even that would be a departure from the normal practice not only in India but elsewhere and it would bring certain difficulties in its train. Appointments abroad, to my knowledge, are nowhere made by committees for obvious reasons and in their case an Appointments Committee would create even greater difficulties. Those difficulties are not lessened by the present set-up of the Cabinet which, according to some of its Members, is not a Cabinet at all and not even a Coalition. If people are appointed to posts abroad on party or communal grounds, our foreign policy would soon be discredited. I realise that in existing circumstances care has to be taken that any representation is not one-sided either from the communal or the provincial point of view. Care has to be taken to give all communities and provinces a chance as far as possible and the proportions laid down for the services should be followed as far as possible. But there are certain overriding considerations of merit, suitability and conformity to the prevailing

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 4, pp. 476-479.

policy which cannot be overridden without peril. Foreign appointments, even more than appointments within the country, are not merely high offices to be distributed as spoils to various parties or aspirants. They have to be thought of in terms of fitness not only in regard to the general policy to be pursued but also with reference to the particular country or post. A person may be fit to be a representative in one country and yet may be totally unsuited for another.

3. Our general policy has to be laid down by the Cabinet as a whole and we have already stated in our instruments of instructions to some of our representatives abroad that they must steer clear of any party or communal lines. It would be exceedingly unfortunate if any of our representatives functioned abroad as communal propagandists. Of course the persons selected may and often will belong to particular parties. But they must be such as can rise above the party level and function as national representatives.

4. Thus far the External Affairs Department and the Commonwealth Relations Department have appointed four persons to relatively important posts abroad. The latest appointment is that of a senior member of the Foreign Service, Mr. K.P.S. Menon, who is going to China as our Ambassador. The other three are, as it so happens, all Muslims—Mr. Asaf Ali, Ambassador in Washington; Dr. Rauf as our Representative in Rangoon; and Mr. Baig as our Consul in Goa. In choosing these three persons I did not think at all as to whether they were Hindus or Muslims, but tried to find the fittest man for the place. It so happened that the three persons chosen were all Muslims, one of them being a colleague of ours in the Cabinet and the two others being persons unconnected with any party or political activity. Some criticism was made about my appointments to the effect that I was choosing Muslims only and neglecting Hindus and others. I did not pay much attention to this criticism because I was satisfied that on merits the choice was good. But, of course, I cannot ignore, in existing circumstances, the fact that a certain balance has to be aimed at.

5. It seems to me that it will be particularly unfortunate if names are discussed in committees or in the Cabinet. This would be undesirable in the case of servicemen and it would be much more so in the case of men or women who are non-officials and who have been connected with the public life of the country. The initiative for an appointment in any of our departments should come from the department itself. If any person is thrust on a department against the wishes of that department, this will inevitably lead to a lack of cooperation and possibly to some conflict.

6. In my letter of 23 January I suggested that there should be further

elucidation of the proposal you have made. There appeared to me to be a difference in your proposal and that put forward by Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel's idea was that the Appointments Committee should have in effect final authority to make a decision. Your proposal refers to a committee to advise you on appointments. If it is a question of advice and recommendation, there is no reason whatever why there should be a committee. The only point of having a committee is to give it authority to appoint. The committee would in effect function on behalf of the Cabinet and approval by you would be purely formal. This point has to be made clear. While I dislike very much the idea of appointments committees being set up and thus starting a practice which is unknown in other countries and which may well lead to complications, I realise that in the abnormal conditions prevailing at present some way out has to be found. Perhaps the formation of such committees would be the lesser evil. I cannot say definitely now as there is a lack of the spirit of cooperation amongst the Members of the Cabinet and far too great a desire to emphasize purely communal issues and appointments based on communal considerations. With this background it is not unlikely that some persons so appointed might function far more as representatives of a communal party than of the nation and government as a whole. This danger has to be avoided. Any arrangement now would have to be temporary and experimental so that we may know exactly whether it works satisfactorily or not. In case it does not prove satisfactory, it will have to be put an end to.

7. Keeping all these considerations in view, I am prepared to accept the principle of having Cabinet committees for appointments, both for service in India and abroad. But it should be clearly understood that these committees are not merely recommendatory and advisory. They must decide finally. In the case of important appointments, if there is any dispute, the matter might be referred to the Cabinet itself. The initiative for proposing any name or names should come from the department concerned.

8. This arrangement would be provisional and might be reviewed later.

9. If this principle is agreed to and accepted, the question of names for the committee can be considered later.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM

III. The Framing of the Constitution

1. *Note to Lord Wavell*[1]

Sir B.N. Rau has sent me a note on various points arising in regard to the Constituent Assembly.

2. The note draws attention to various points for early decision. Sir B.N. Rau has quoted certain precedents which might help us in coming to decisions.

3. The Constituent Assembly will itself make its own rules of procedure. At present all that has got to be done is to arrange for preliminary steps to be taken for the Assembly to meet.

4. Date: The first point is about the date of the Assembly. It is obviously desirable for the Assembly to meet in a peaceful atmosphere when all its members are taking part. Unfortunately, the Muslim League has for the present decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly. Whether this decision will be revised or not I cannot say. It should be our attempt to induce all the members of the Constituent Assembly to take part in it. In my broadcast last night[2] I made some such attempt and tried to make it clear that our conception of the Constituent Assembly was not one where different groups came into constant conflict with each other, but rather one where a spirit of cooperation prevailed and there was every attempt to get mutually agreed decisions. I further made it clear that we had accepted sections. There had been some confusion about sections and groups. Sir B.N. Rau has pointed this out. It is the sections that are compulsory and then the section decides in regard to the groups.

5. While we should invite and make it easy for all to join the Constituent Assembly, it is obvious that the Assembly cannot wait indefinitely because some of its members are not prepared to participate in it. That will be a fatal mistake and would put an end to the very conception of the Constituent Assembly. Therefore, it becomes essential for a proper date to be fixed for the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. That date cannot be too far off for various obvious reasons. It is necessary also to fix the date, because other dates depend upon it, such as the date of the meeting of the Central Legislature. Sir B.N. Rau has suggested two possible dates for the Constituent Assembly, one from October 14th to October 22nd, the other from Novem-

1. 8 September 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 450-452.
2. See *post*, section 9, item 3.

ber 11th to November 19th. I am definitely of opinion that the earlier date should be preferred and that the Central Legislature should meet after the first session of the Constituent Assembly. It seems to me that the nine days allotted for the C.A. by Sir B.N. Rau are hardly enough. We should have a clear fortnight for it. After that it may adjourn and its committees may start working.

6. It will be necessary for us to fix the date of the Central Legislative Assembly. In fixing this we shall have to bear in mind various important holidays like the Pooja, Moharrum, Divali, etc. Also, the annual session of the National Congress has been fixed for the 21st of November.[3] This means that the week beginning from the 18th November will be taken up by the Congress session.

7. Admission of press and public: All we have to decide is what should be done on the first day of the C.A., because subsequent decisions will be taken by the C.A. itself. I think that on this first day the press should be admitted as well as a limited number of the general public. Accommodation being very limited, not many people can be so admitted. Sir B.N. Rau refers to considerations of safety. Steps should be taken to provide for this.

8. Broadcasting: I see no objection to broadcasting of the proceedings of the inaugural session of the C.A. Subsequent sessions are likely to be *in camera*.

9. Provisional Chairman: It appears to be more or less agreed that the provisional Chairman should be the oldest member of the C.A. Probably Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha is the oldest member and he will make an excellent Chairman.

10. Medical Aid: This question requires no decision of policy. Obviously some arrangements for medical aid should be made and if the American hospital[4] near the Willingdon aerodrome is available that would suit our purpose very well and would also be useful to the general public. The Public Health Department might consider this matter and report.

11. Sir B.N. Rau's pamphlets: Sir B.N. Rau has prepared a number of leaflets and pamphlets on the various issues before the C.A. I have read most of them and I find them very helpful. I think they should certainly be printed

3. The 54th annual session of the Indian National Congress, presided over by J.B. Kripalani, was held at Meerut from 21 to 24 November 1946.
4. Now known as Safdarjang Hospital.

in convenient book form all together and sent to all the members of the Constituent Assembly as soon as they are ready. This will give them time to study them before the meeting of the C.A. Sir B.N. Rau is apprehensive of publicity being given to these pamphlets. I do not think it matters very much if any of them are published in the newspapers, though I should like to avoid this publicity. They may be issued to members as "confidential documents, not intended for publication." Obviously, they cannot remain private and parts of them may appear in the press. I am quite prepared to take the risk. Apparently the pamphlets have been written very objectively and not with a view to support any particular thesis.

12. Reference and Research Section: I think such a section should be immediately constituted. Of course, the Constituent Assembly itself will finally decide about this matter, as about other matters. But it is desirable that the section should begin functioning and collect material before the C.A. meets.

13. Convening of the C.A.: Two proposals have been made: (i) that the temporary Chairman should convene the C.A., (ii) that the Viceroy should convene it on the advice of the Interim Government. In doing so it would be clearly stated that the Viceroy was acting at the request of the Interim Government.

I see no objection to either of these proposals.

14. Final decisions on these matters will have to be made at a formal Cabinet meeting. I suggest, however, that the necessary papers might be circulated among the Members of the Cabinet who will first consider them informally and then a formal reference can be made to the full Cabinet.

15. A copy of this note might be sent to Sir B.N. Rau.

2. Constituent Assembly and the Tribal Areas[1]

I have read the letter of Sir Olaf Caroe,[2] dated the 2nd September, and the note on tribal areas attached to it. The note is very helpful, so is the letter. Generally speaking, I agree with the points made in the letter.

1. A note written on 10 September 1946. Constituent Assembly of India, Constitution Section, File No. CA/16/Genl/46, Ministry of Law, Government of India.
2. Caroe did not wish administrative solutions to be tried for the tribal areas during the framing of the constitution. He wanted the problem to be kept free from party affiliations and negotiations started with the Afridis and Mohmands, as all these tribes, in his view, were just as free as the States to negotiate.

2. Whatever our approach to the problem may be through the Constituent Assembly, I think it should be made clear that we are not going to deprive the people of the tribal areas of the freedom they possess, or to impose any scheme upon them against their will. Whatever is done will be done in consultation with them and with their concurrence. Also, it would be undesirable to unsettle the tribes during this period of the framing of the constitution. I agree with Sir Olaf and Dr. Khan Sahib that the Advisory Committee should make their own contacts with the tribesmen who should not in any sense be mobilised for this purpose by the Government.

3. Obviously, the Provincial Government and the A.G.G. will have to be consulted. Also, obviously, the approach should not be from a party point of view but should be an all-India approach. That approach should be essentially a friendly and cooperative one, seeking to understand and give effect, as far as possible, to the point of view of the tribal people. They should be made to feel that there is no attempt whatever to dominate over them or suppress them or to interfere with their existing freedom, but rather to place larger spheres of cooperative working before them for their good as well as the good of India as a whole.

4. Probably some kind of a tour in these areas will be necessary. The whole Advisory Committee cannot, of course, undertake such a tour, but a small sub-committee will do so. Sir Olaf points out that while these tribes have a fairly developed democratic sense in so far as their jirgas are concerned, they are not in the habit of electing representatives. Even so, I would suggest that they should be encouraged to send some representatives to the Advisory Committee. If it is made clear to the tribes that these representatives will not finally bind them and that all proposals concerning them will come up to them for their final approval, probably they will have no objection to choosing some representatives as members of the Advisory Committee. It would be highly desirable to have them as such members, both for their education and the education of the rest of India, in the act of cooperation for common purposes.

5. What the future shape of things will be it is premature to say now. But I take it that the Frontier Province Provincial Government will have a close say in this matter and in future also they will have to be associated with their neighbours in some way or other. That need not mean any interference with tribal areas. They would merely be a step towards cooperation of peoples living near each other. One of the unfortunate features of the past has been a certain cutting off of the tribal areas from the Frontier Province, although there is not much difference between the people on either side of the line of demarcation. The natural approach to the tribal people should be through the

people of the Frontier Province who know them and have a common language.

6. The Advisory Committee that the Cabinet Mission have suggested in their statement of May 16th is very much a mixed body dealing with entirely disparate subjects. These subjects may be classified as follows:—

(i) Fundamental rights;
(ii) Minority problems;
(iii) Tribal areas;
  (a) North-Western Tribes;
  (b) North-Eastern Tribes;
  (c) Aboriginal and backward tribes in various parts of India;

7. It is obvious that the Advisory Committee will have to split up into sections to consider these separate problems. There might even be three separate sections for the tribal problems as indicated above, because the North-Western Frontier people are entirely different from the North-Eastern. Each of these sections would, to begin with, function separately and then all should meet together in the Advisory Committee for their final recommendations. This would really mean that the Advisory Committee would be a body having a very large membership, if it is to represent all the groups and areas concerned.

8. The note on the N.W.F. Tribal Areas which Sir Olaf Caroe has sent leads me to think that similar notes for the other tribal areas would be helpful. I do not know if any attempt has been made to get such notes from north-east Assam or from the other provinces where there are backward or aboriginal tribes. If this has not been done, I suggest to Sir B.N. Rau's department that they might get into touch with the authorities or people concerned and get such information from them.

9. In view of what I have said above, it would be premature to think of choosing representatives from the tribal areas at this stage. The proper course probably would be for a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee to visit the north-west areas, meet the jirgas or assemblies of the people there and explain the position and invite them to send representatives who could be added to the Advisory Committee.

10. It might be desirable to draw up a provisional tour programme for this sub-committee visiting the north-west. This tour should be a brief one and should not take too much time. Final decision will, of course, have to be taken by the Constituent Assembly and the Advisory Committee that it forms.

11. A copy of this note might be sent to Sir B.N. Rau.

3. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
14 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

Thank you for your letter of the 13th September.[2]

I think that the meeting of the Constituent Assembly should not be made contingent on other happenings. It seems to me essential that there should be some definiteness and finality about our work. Perhaps this matter might be considered at the Cabinet meeting next Monday.

It is important that final dates should be fixed also for the meeting of the Legislative Assembly as I am told that six weeks notice has to be issued.

With regard to para 6 of your letter I feel that your view does not wholly fit in with the nature of the Constituent Assembly or of the present Interim Government of India.[3] What the exact legal position may be it is for lawyers to determine, though it seems to us that there is no strict legal background for the Constituent Assembly nor are there any conventions except practice in similar cases in other countries, notably those of the British Commonwealth. Emphasis has frequently been laid on the fact that the Constituent Assembly, having come into existence, controls its own destinies entirely without any interference from outside. That is to say that even the Government of India should not interfere with it. The only questions that arise are therefore as to how it should be summoned. It would be in keeping with its autonomy for it to be summoned in a way which involves the least amount of external action. Sir B.N. Rau having considered a large number of precedents suggested two methods,[4] and I think either of those methods might have been suitable. I do not know how this question raises any controversial issue that affects the future of the Constituent Assembly or its decisions. It is a question of propriety and recognition of the changed circumstances now prevailing.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 520.
2. Wavell agreed in his letter of 13 September 1946 that the Constituent Assembly could meet for a fortnight from 14 October, provided every attempt was made to secure a coalition Government with the Muslim League before that date. He agreed to all the other points in Nehru's note of 8 September.
3. Wavell claimed that according to para 21 of the May 16 statement the Constituent Assembly came under the authority of the Viceroy and not the Government of India.
4. The two methods were: (i) that the temporary Chairman should convene the C.A.; or (ii) that the Viceroy should convene it on the advice of the Interim Government. It would be clearly stated that the Viceroy was acting at the request of the Interim Government.

This question by itself may not be of very great importance but it does raise the issue of the Interim Government in the whole scheme of things. If the Interim Government of India is to be excluded from many normal activities with which in effect it is intimately connected, then it would appear that this Government is to be strictly limited in its work. This would naturally affect its approach to many problems and would also have its reactions on public opinion. You will remember that you assured us of the widest latitude in our day-to-day activities.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. *Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru*

I discussed today with Nehru the question of convening the Constituent Assembly. He had asked that matter should be discussed in Cabinet but I refused on ground that it was not a matter for Cabinet but for me. I maintained the position that I thought it useless to convene Constituent Assembly until some understanding had been reached with Muslim League. Nehru said that he and his colleagues had discussed the matter informally and concluded that a meeting should not take place till December 9th. The rough programme would be:

December 9th to December 23rd—Meeting of Union Constituent Assembly.

January and February—Discussions in Committees, e.g., Drafting Committee, Advisory Committee, Negotiating Committee. Also meetings of sections.

2. At end of two months Nehru hopes to have an outline scheme ready for Union Constitution, which would then be considered by whole Assembly and referred to provinces. This looks optimistic to me.

I said I would consider whether announcement could be made about date for convening Assembly, but as my condition for convening it cannot be announced I propose to hold this up, at any rate, during discussions with Jinnah.

3. Intention is to have session of Central Legislative Assembly beginning October 28th.

1. Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 16 September 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 527.

5. The Need for Elections in Baluchistan[1]

Baluchistan has long remained a backwater in the political framework of India. In many other ways also it is very backward. Recently in connection with the election of a representative to the Constituent Assembly the question arose as to how the representative from Baluchistan should be chosen. There was no proper or easy method and ultimately a very unsatisfactory method was adopted.[2] Obviously Baluchistan will be considered in connection with constitution-making for India by the Constituent Assembly, but it is desirable that something should be done as soon as possible without waiting for the conclusion of the labours of the Constituent Assembly. That is to say, some kind of elective system may be introduced there. I should like the Foreign Secretary to consider this matter and suggest what might be done. We might also consult Sir B.N. Rau on this subject.

2. Any elective scheme will take some time to materialise, however much we may rush it. Probably a minimum period would be 5 or 6 months. It should not be more because otherwise it will just run into the Constituent Assembly and its conclusions. Meanwhile something might be done immediately which perhaps will not be elective, though it might still be to some extent representative. That is, some kind of Interim Council might be set up to consider all the problems and advise the A.G.G. Normally it should be stated that the advice will be accepted and acted upon, though a certain reserve power may be kept for special occasions.

3. Thus we can have this Interim Council almost immediately and this may be chosen from popular organizations functioning in Baluchistan, like the *Anjuman-i-Watan,* the Muslim League, the *Jamiat-ul-Ulema,* and such other organizations as may exist there, provided they have some standing in public life. Then secondly immediate steps might be taken for the formation of a scheme to set up an elective Council. This need not be just a replica of the other provinces but something to suit the special circumstances of Baluchistan.

4. I should like Secretary's reactions to these proposals and after that I should like to consult Sir B.N. Rau also.

1. Note, 21 September 1946. File No. 55-PS/46-PMS.
2. The Cabinet Mission proposed that the representative of Baluchistan be elected at a joint meeting of the Shahi Jirga and the non-official members of the Quetta Municipality.

6. An Advisory Council for Baluchistan[1]

The attached note from Sir B.N. Rau explains the constitutional position in Baluchistan clearly. This should help in our framing proposals for Baluchistan. The present administration is rather a mixed affair, constitutionally speaking, but, in effect, it is the Governor-General in two different capacities and the Governor-General-in-Council who are responsible. Therefore, if the Governor-General and the Governor-General-in-Council agree about any proposal there should be no difficulty.

The actual proposal is very simple. It is to create an advisory council consisting of one or more representatives of each of the following organizations, namely, the *Anjuman-i-Watan,* which is affiliated to the Congress, the local Muslim League and the local *Jamiat-ul-Ulema.*

Also, if considered necessary, of a representative of the *tumandars*[2] and *sardars.*

Though this advisory council will have to be nominated, it is obviously desirable that the persons nominated should be selected by the organisations concerned. The functions of the advisory council should be to advise generally the Chief Commissioner in his various capacities in regard to all his functions, or most of them. Legally speaking, the Chief Commissioner will continue to be responsible for whatever he does, but normally he would act on the advice of his council.

Sir B.N. Rau gives an interesting example for Canada of how legal powers are exercised by convention on the advice of Ministers. This matter has, I understand, already been referred to the Chief Commissioner of Baluchistan for his suggestions. The papers can be put up before H.E. and later on before the Cabinet.

1. Note, 3 October 1946. File No. 55-PS/46-PMS.
2. *Tumandar*—A commander of ten thousand.

7. To G.E.B. Abell[1]

New Delhi
15th November 1946

Dear Mr. Abell,

Some days ago Sir B.N. Rau came to me to discuss the various arrangements in regard to the Constituent Assembly as the time is approaching

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7,* Vol. 9, pp. 76-77.

when the Assembly is going to meet. Among the matters discussed was the form of the invitation to be issued. The form which has been suggested by the Viceroy, after consultation with the Secretary of State, had not been entirely approved of by us at the time and I had mentioned this fact to the Viceroy. However, in order to avoid any further controversy on this issue, I asked Sir B.N. Rau to adopt that form and to issue the invitations as soon as possible. The Assembly is to meet on the 9th December, that is to say, about three and a half weeks from today. It is highly desirable that members of the Constituent Assembly should get the invitations as early as possible.

Today Sir B.N. Rau came to see me and told me that you had asked him to delay issuing the invitations, pending the return of Lord Wavell from the Frontier.[2] I do not know what has happened which should necessitate this delay. The date of the Assembly was fixed by the Cabinet, as far as I remember, and everything has been done thus far to fit in with this date. Any delay in issuing the invitations might even come in the way of issuing notice in proper time prior to the date fixed. When the Muslim League members joined the Interim Government it was clearly stated by the Viceroy that this was done on the explicit understanding that they would withdraw their resolution of non-participation in the Constituent Assembly. This has not only been not done thus far, but a meeting of the Muslim League Council has not been called for the purpose. This morning's newspaper contains a press statement made by Mr. Jinnah.[3] In answer to a question as to when the League Council would be summoned to consider this question, he said "I cannot say". He added further that he could not discuss the matter "now", "for state reasons ...it is not in the public interest just now". It is clear that unless the Council meets and withdraws its resolution the League boycott of the Constituent Assembly continues.

This creates a very grave situation affecting not only the Constituent Assembly but also the Interim Government which has been formed and functions on the basis of the Constituent Assembly being accepted. As you perhaps know the Working Committee of the Congress are meeting on the 19th of this month. On the 21st the Subjects Committee of the full session of the Congress meet in Meerut, to be followed by the full session itself. The Working Committee will have to consider this question and come to certain decisions about it. It is important, therefore, that we should know definitely by the 19th, at the latest, what the exact position is. If anything came in the way of the Constituent Assembly meeting on the 9th December, the Congress would obviously have to reconsider the whole question.

2. Lord Wavell returned to New Delhi on 19 November 1946.
3. On 14 November 1946, Jinnah said that the Interim Government should not be allowed to do anything administratively or by convention which would prejudice the problem of the future constitution of India.

Will you kindly communicate with the Viceroy immediately and let me know what his answer is in the course of the next two days?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. To G.E.B. Abell[1]

New Delhi
16 November 1946

Dear Mr. Abell,
I wrote to you yesterday about the summoning of the Constituent Assembly. I have since consulted many of my colleagues and their reaction to the delay in summoning the Constituent Assembly has been very strong. They feel that the invitations must be issued by the 19th November at the very latest. On the 19th the Working Committee of the Congress is going to meet.

I hope you have communicated by telegram my yesterday's letter to the Viceroy. Could you please also forward to him the following message from me?

> In view of the nearness of the date fixed for the Constituent Assembly meeting it is urgently necessary to issue invitations to members immediately. I am surprised to find that instructions have been issued on your behalf to stop or delay the issue of such invitations. Any such delay is contrary to the decisions already made and would upset the whole programme which we have envisaged. We hope that you will send instructions immediately for the issue of the invitations. At the latest these invitations should go out by the 19th of this month when the Congress Working Committee is going to meet to consider the situation. I shall be grateful to you for an early reply.[2]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 83-84.
2. Abell replied the same day: "...He (Viceroy) realises how much importance you attach to the matter but says he cannot agree to the invitations being sent out without his first making an effort to ensure that they will be accepted by the League and that the League Council will be called without delay."

9. Wavell's Record of Interview with Nehru[1]

1. I said that I was as anxious as anyone to get on with the Constituent Assembly, as was H.M.G. But it was important that it should meet in the right atmosphere. The Muslim League were at present very worked-up over Bihar.[2] I had had a talk with Jinnah this afternoon, and he had advised me strongly against calling the Constituent Assembly as he said it was likely to cause further communal trouble, particularly in the Muslim provinces; and it did not appear that the Muslim League would attend the Assembly if called now.[3]

On the other hand we could not put it off indefinitely, and if Nehru advised me that he considered it should be called, I would issue invitations at once.

2. Nehru referred to previous postponements, and said that if the Assembly were postponed now, there was no convenient date till April, by which time everybody would have lost interest in it. He therefore recommended that invitations should be issued at once. The first session would last for about ten days, and would concern itself with procedure, the appointment of committees, and so on, and would then break up until April. In the intervening period there would presumably be discussions by the sections. I said that I would have the invitations issued;[4] and that I hoped that in the period before December 9th there would be informal discussions between Congress and the League, which might result in the League coming in. I said it was quite clear that Congress could not make a constitution for India without the Muslims, any more than Section C could make a constitution for Assam without the agreement of the people of Assam.

1. 19 November 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 110-112.
2. The communal disturbances in eastern Bengal had their repercussions in Bihar where rioting broke out on 24 October 1946 in Chapra, Patna and Bhagalpur districts.
3. In an interview with Wavell on 19 November 1946, Jinnah insisted that a settlement between the two communities was impossible and that it would be of no use for the Muslims to come into the Constituent Assembly. He alleged that the Bihar disturbances had been completely organised by the Congress leaders. He maintained that to call the Constituent Assembly would be a great mistake and would lead to great disaster since it would be difficult to control events in the provinces with Muslim majorities.
4. On 20 November 1946, Wavell invited the Constituent Assembly to meet on 9 December 1946. On 21 November 1946, Jinnah declared that no representative of the Muslim League would participate in the Constituent Assembly and reaffirmed the Bombay Resolution of the League Council of July 1946.

3. Nehru then referred to the question of the Muslim League membership of the Interim Government being dependent on their acceptance of the long-term issue. I agreed, but said that we had better take our fences one by one, we could leave this one until we saw what the attitude of the Muslim League would be to the calling of the Constituent Assembly.[5] I said that Mr. Jinnah felt that to call his Council at this time might lead to further communal tension.

4. Nehru then referred to the criticism which the Congress members of the Government were getting from their own people. I said that that was partly because they had led them to expect too much and because they tried to change the constitution during the interim period. He demanded to know in what way they had done this, and I referred to the undermining of the authority of the Governors, officials, and police, the result of which was largely responsible for the failure to deal effectively and promptly with the recent disturbances. I said that this interim period was a very difficult time for everybody, and that therefore we should make it as short as possible; and that we ought to, during the period, uphold the existing authority and form of Government until there was something to put in its place.

5. I then told him of my tour to the Frontier, of my meetings with jirgas, of the affair on the Malakand, and so forth.[6] He did not comment much, but seemed to agree that it would be better to leave the Frontier alone for the present.

6. I then questioned the wisdom of sending Krishna Menon on his tour of European countries without first discussing the matter with the Muslim League, since foreign relations were a central subject, and it seemed inadvisable to send someone who was not only a noted Congress propagandist, but had hardly been in India at all for many years.[7] After some talk Nehru agreed reluctantly to mention the matter to Liaquat Ali Khan before it came before Council.

7. He then mentioned various diplomatic appointments, said that he had Asaf Ali in mind for the embassy at Washington (I refrained from comment); thought that Akbar Hydari should be considered for some important post;

5. In his letter of 17 November 1946, Jinnah urged Wavell to announce immediately the postponement of the Constituent Assembly *sine die*, so that every effort could be made to restore peace in Bihar.
6. Wavell visited the North-West Frontier from 14 to 19 November 1946.
7. Nehru proposed to appoint Krishna Menon as his personal representative in an informal capacity, to visit European capitals with a view to establishing diplomatic relations.

had apparently written to Subbaroyan to offer him Malaya; and had someone whom I do not know in mind for Ceylon. He said that his sister had written that several countries including Brazil had wished to open up diplomatic relations with India; I said that undoubtedly India would have to develop a diplomatic service, but that we need not be in too much of a hurry.

8. I finally referred to the speeches of Jayaprakash Narayan in the U.P.,[8] and of Jagat Narain Lall in Bihar. Nehru seemed to think it impossible that Jayaprakash Narayan could have said anything objectionable, and was anxious for me to meet him. He said that he had heard Jagat Narain Lall criticised but had heard no evidence against him.

9. Nehru was quiet and quite friendly throughout, and remained at the shallow end of the pool.

8. In speeches in the U.P., Jayaprakash Narayan urged the people to prepare for the impending struggle "which the country will have to launch in the near future to liquidate foreign imperialism". He asserted that the communal disturbances in Noakhali would benefit only the British, for the Muslim League had their full support. To win freedom they had to launch a bigger revolution than that of 1942 aiming at capturing and running the entire Government machinery.

10. Aims and Objects of the Constituent Assembly[1]

Mr. Chairman, this Constituent Assembly has now been in session for some days. It has done much formal business, but more is yet to be done. We have been cutting our way and clearing the ground on which we intend to erect the edifice of a constitution. It, however, seems proper that before we proceed further we should clearly understand where we are going and what we intend building. It is apparent that on such occasions details are unnecessary. In building, you will, no doubt, use each brick after mature consideration. Usually, when one desires to construct a building, one must have a plan for the structure that one wishes to erect and then collect the material required. For a long time we have been having various plans for a free India in our minds, but now, when we are beginning the actual work, I hope, you will be

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 13 December 1946. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. I, 1946, 9 to 23 December 1946, pp. 55-62.

at one with me when I say, that we should present a clear picture of this plan to ourselves, to the people of India and to the world at large. The resolution that I am placing before you defines our aims, describes an outline of the plan and points the way which we are going to tread.

You all know that this Constituent Assembly is not what many of us wished it to be. It has come into being under particular conditions and the British Government has a hand in its birth. They have attached to it certain conditions. We accepted the State Paper, which may be called the foundation of this Assembly, after serious deliberations and we shall endeavour to work within its limits. But you must not ignore the source from which this Assembly derives its strength. Governments do not come into being by State Papers. Governments are, in fact, the expression of the will of the people. We have met here today because of the strength of the people behind us and we shall go as far as the people—not of any party or group but the people as a whole—shall wish us to go. We should, therefore, always keep in mind the passions that lie in the hearts of the masses of the Indian people and try to fulfil them.

I am sorry there are so many absentees. Many members who have a right to come and attend the meeting are not here today. This, in one sense, increases our responsibility. We shall have to be careful that we do nothing which may cause uneasiness in others or goes against any principle. We do hope that those who have abstained will soon join us in our deliberations, since this constitution can only go as far as the strength behind it can push it. It has ever been and shall always be our ardent desire to see the people of India united together so that we may frame a constitution, which will be acceptable to the masses of the Indian people. It is, at the same time, manifest that when a great country starts to advance, no party or group can stop it. This House, although it has met in the absence of some of its members, will continue functioning and try to carry out its work at all costs.

The resolution that I am placing before you is in the nature of a pledge. It has been drafted after mature deliberation and efforts have been made to avoid controversy. A great country is sure to have a lot of controversial issues; but we have tried to avoid controversy as much as possible. The resolution deals with fundamentals which are commonly held and have been accepted by the people. I do not think this resolution contains anything which was outside the limitations laid down by the British Cabinet or anything which may be disagreeable to any Indian, no matter to what party or group he belongs. Unfortunately our country is full of differences, but no one, except perhaps a few, would dispute the fundamentals which this resolution lays down. The resolution states that it is our firm and solemn resolve to have a sovereign Indian republic. We have not mentioned the word 'republic' till this time; but you will well understand that a free India can be nothing but a republic.

On this occasion, when the representatives of the Indian States are not present, I desire to make it clear how this resolution will affect the Indian States. It has also been suggested, and the suggestion may take the form of an amendment laying down that since certain sections of the House are not present, the consideration of the resolution may be postponed. In my opinion, such an amendment is not in keeping with the spirit of the times, because if we do not approve the first objective that we are placing before ourselves, before our country and before the world at large, our deliberations will become meaningless and lifeless, and the people will have no interest in our work. Our intention regarding the States must be clearly understood. We do desire that all sections of India should willingly participate in the future Indian Union but in what way and with what sort of government rests with them. The resolution does not go into these details. It contains only the fundamentals. It imposes nothing on the States against their will. The point to be considered is how they will join us and what sort of administration they will have. I do not wish to express my personal opinion on the matter. Nevertheless I must say that no State can have an administration which goes against our fundamental principles or gives less freedom than obtaining in other parts of India. The resolution does not concern itself with what form of government they will have or whether the present Rajas and Nawabs will continue or not. These things concern the people of the States. It is quite possible that the people may like to have their Rajas. The decision will rest with them. Our republic shall include the whole of India. If a part within it desires to have its own type of administration it will be at liberty to have it.

I do not wish that anything should be added to or subtracted from the resolution. It is my hope that this House will do nothing that may appear in the papers, so that at no time should people, who are concerned with these problems but who are not present here, be able to say that this House indulged in irregular talk.

I desire to make it clear that this resolution does not go into details. It only seeks to show how we shall lead India to gain the objectives laid down in it. You will take into consideration its words and I hope you will accept them; but the main thing is the spirit behind it. Laws are made of words but this resolution is something higher than the law. If you examine its words like lawyers you will produce only a lifeless thing. We are at present standing midway between two eras; the old order is fast changing, yielding place to the new. At such a juncture we have to give a live message to India and to the world at large. Later on we can frame our constitution in whatever words we please. At present we have to send out a message to show what we have resolved to attempt to do. As to what form or shape this resolution, this declaration will ultimately take, we shall see later. But one thing is, however, certain; it is not a law but is something that breathes life in human minds.

I hope the House will pass the resolution which is of a special nature. It is an undertaking with ourselves and with the millions of our brothers and sisters who live in this great country. If it is passed, it will be a sort of pledge that we shall have to carry out. With this expectation and in this form, I place it before you. You have copies of it in Hindustani with you. I will therefore not take more of your time to read it in Hindi. I will, however, read it in English and speak further on it in that language.

I beg to move:

(1) This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution;

(2) Wherein the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the Independent Sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all; and

(3) Wherein the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the Law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous Units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union, or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting therefrom; and

(4) Wherein all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people; and

(5) Wherein shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality; and

(6) Wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes; and

(7) Wherein shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic and its Sovereign rights on land, sea, and air according to justice and the law of civilised nations, and

(8) this ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

Sir, this is the fifth day of this first session of the Constituent Assembly. Thus far we have laboured on certain provisional and procedural matters which are essential. We have a clear field to work upon; we have to prepare the ground and we have been doing that these few days. We have still much to do. We have to pass our rules of procedure and to appoint committees and the like, before we can proceed to the real step, to the real work of this Constituent Assembly, that is the high adventure of giving shape, in the printed and written word, to a nation's dream and aspiration. But even now, at this stage it is surely desirable that we should give some indication to ourselves, to those who look to this Assembly, to those millions in this country who are looking up to us and to the world at large, as to what we may do, what we seek to achieve, whither we are going. It is with this purpose that I have placed this resolution before this House. It is a resolution and yet, it is something much more than a resolution. It is a declaration. It is a firm resolve. It is a pledge and an undertaking and it is for all of us I hope a dedication. And I wish this House, if I may say so respectfully, should consider this resolution not in a spirit of narrow legal wording, but rather to look at the spirit behind that resolution. Words are magic things often enough, but even the magic of words sometimes cannot convey the magic of the human spirit and of a nation's passion. And so, I cannot say that this resolution at all conveys the passion that lies in the hearts and the minds of the Indian people today. It seeks very feebly to tell the world of what we have thought or dreamt of so long, and what we now hope to achieve in the near future. It is in that spirit that I venture to place this resolution before the House and it is in that spirit that I trust the House will receive it and ultimately pass it. And may I, Sir, also, with all respect, suggest to you and to the House, that, when the time comes for the passing of this resolution let it be not done in the formal way by the raising of hands, but much more solemnly, by all of us standing up and thus taking this pledge anew.

The House knows that there are many absentees here and many members, who have a right to come here, have not come. We regret that fact because we should have liked to associate with ourselves as many people, as many representatives from the different parts of India and different groups as possible. We have undertaken a tremendous task and we seek the cooperation of all people in that task; because the future of India that we have envisaged is not confined to any group or section or province or other, but it comprises all the four hundred million people of India, and it is with deep regret that we find some benches empty and some colleagues who might have been here, absent. I do feel, I do hope, that they will come and

that this House, in its future stages, will have the benefit of the cooperation of all. Meanwhile, there is a duty cast upon us and that is to bear the absentees in mind, to remember always that we are here not to function for one party or one group, but always to think of India as a whole and always to think of the welfare of the four hundred millions that comprise India. We are all now, in our respective spheres, partymen, belonging to this or that group and presumably we shall continue to act in our respective parties. Nevertheless, the time comes when we have to rise above party and think of the nation, think sometimes of even the world at large of which our nation is a great part. And when I think of the work of this Constituent Assembly, it seems to me, the time has come when we should, so far as we are capable of it, rise above our ordinary selves and party disputes and think of the great problem before us in the widest and most tolerant and most effective manner so that, whatever we may produce, should be worthy of India as a whole and should be such that the world should recognise that we have functioned, as we should have functioned, in this high adventure.

There is another person who is absent here and who must be in the minds of many of us today—the great leader of our people, the father of our nation—who has been the architect of this Assembly and all that has gone before it and possibly of much that will follow. He is not here because, in pursuit of his ideals, he is ceaselessly working in a far corner of India.[2] But I have no doubt that his spirit hovers over this place and blesses our undertaking.

As I stand here, Sir, I feel the weight of all manner of things crowding around me. We are at the end of an era and possibly very soon we shall embark upon a new age; and my mind goes back to the great past of India, to the 5,000 years of India's history, from the very dawn of that history which might be considered almost the dawn of human history, till today. All that past crowds around me and exhilarates me and, at the same time, somewhat oppresses me. Am I worthy of that past? When I think also of the future, the greater future I hope, standing on this sword's edge of the present between this mighty past and the mightier future, I tremble a little and feel overwhelmed by this mighty task. We have come here at a strange moment in India's history. I do not know but I do feel that there is some magic in this moment of transition from the old to the new, something of that magic which one sees when the night turns into day and even though the day may be a cloudy one, it is day after all for when the clouds move away, we can see the sun later on. Because of all this I find a little difficulty in addressing this House and putting all my ideas before it and I feel also that in this long succession of thousands of years, I see the mighty figures

2. Mahatma Gandhi had set out on 9 November 1946 to walk through the disturbed areas in the interior of Noakhali district in Bengal.

that have come and gone and I see also the long succession of our comrades who have laboured for the freedom of India. And now we stand on the verge of this passing age, trying, labouring to usher in the new. I am sure the House will feel the solemnity of this moment and will endeavour to treat this resolution which it is my proud privilege to place before it in that solemn manner. I believe there are a large number of amendments coming before the House.[3] I have not seen most of them. It is open to the House, to any member of this House, to move any amendment and it is for the House to accept it or reject it, but I would, with all respect, suggest that this is not a moment for us to be technical and legal about small matters when we have big things to face, big things to say and big things to do, and therefore I would hope that the House would consider this resolution in this big manner and not lose itself in wordy quarrels and squabbles.

I think also of the various Constituent Assemblies that have gone before and of what took place at the making of the great American nation when the fathers of that nation met and fashioned out a constitution which has stood the test of so many years, more than a century and a half, and of the great nation which has resulted, which has been built up on the basis of that constitution. My mind goes back to that mighty revolution which took place also over 150 years ago and to that Constituent Assembly that met in that gracious and lovely city of Paris which has fought so many battles for freedom, to the difficulties that that Constituent Assembly had and to how the King and other authorities came in its way, and still it continued. The House will remember that when these difficulties came and even the room for a meeting was denied to the then Constituent Assembly, they betook themselves to an open tennis court and met there and took the oath, which is called the Oath of the Tennis Court,[4] that they continued meeting in spite of Kings, in spite of the others, and did not disperse till they had finished the task they had undertaken. Well, I trust that it is in that solemn spirit that we too are meeting here and that we, too, whether we meet in this chamber or other chambers, or in the fields or in the market place, will go on meeting and continue our work till we have finished it.

Then my mind goes back to a more recent revolution which gave rise to a new type of State, the revolution that took place in Russia and out of which has arisen the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, another mighty country which is playing a tremendous part in the world, not only a mighty country but for us in India, a neighbouring country.

3. There were forty amendments to the resolution.
4. On 20 June 1789, Louis XVI of France ordered the meeting place of the National Assembly closed. The deputies of the Third Estate, finding the doors shut, moved to the nearby royal tennis court where the delegates swore not to adjourn until they had provided a constitution for France.

So our mind goes back to these great examples and we seek to learn from their success and to avoid their failures. Perhaps we may not be able to avoid failures because some measure of failure is inherent in human effort. Nevertheless, we shall advance, I am certain, in spite of obstructions and difficulties, and achieve and realise the dream that we have dreamt so long. In this resolution which the House knows has been drafted with exceeding care, we have tried to avoid saying too much or too little. It is difficult to frame a resolution of this kind. If you say too little, it becomes just a pious resolution and nothing more. If you say too much, it encroaches on the functions of those who are going to draw up a constitution, that is, on the functions of this House. This resolution is not a part of the constitution we are going to draw up, and it must not be looked at as such. This House has perfect freedom to draw up that constitution and when others come into this House, they will have perfect freedom too to fashion that constitution. This resolution therefore steers between these two extremes and lays down only certain fundamentals which I do believe, no group or party and hardly any individual in India can dispute. We say that it is our firm and solemn resolve to have an independent sovereign republic. India is bound to be sovereign, it is bound to be independent and it is bound to be a republic. I will not go into the arguments about monarchy and the rest, but obviously we cannot produce monarchy in India out of nothing. It is not there. If it is to be an independent and sovereign State, we are not going to have an external monarchy and we cannot have a search for some local monarchies. It must inevitably be a republic. Now, some friends have raised the question: "Why have you not put in the word 'democratic' here?" Well, I told them that it is conceivable, of course, that a republic may not be democratic but the whole of our past is witness to this fact that we stand for democratic institutions. Obviously we are aiming at democracy and nothing less than a democracy. What form of democracy, what shape it might take is another matter. The democracies of the present day, many of them in Europe and elsewhere, have played a great part in the world's progress. Yet it may be doubtful if those democracies may not have to change their shape somewhat before long if they have to remain completely democratic. We are not going just to copy, I hope, a certain democratic procedure or an institution of a so-called democratic country. We may improve upon it. In any event whatever system of government we may establish here must fit in with the temper of our people and be acceptable to them. We stand for democracy. It will be for this House to determine what shape to give to that democracy, the fullest democracy, I hope. The House will notice that in this resolution although we have not used the word 'democratic' because we thought it is obvious that the word 'republic' contains that word and we did not want to use unnecessary words and redundant words but we have done something much more than using the word. We have given the content of democracy in

this resolution and not only the content of democracy but the content, if I may say so, of economic democracy in this resolution. Others might take objection to this resolution on the ground that we have not said that it should be a socialist State. Well, I stand for socialism and, I hope, India will stand for socialism and that India will go towards the constitution of a socialist State and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way. What form of socialism again is another matter for your consideration. But the main thing is that in such a resolution, if in accordance with my own desire I had put in that we want a socialist State, we would have put in something which may be agreeable to many and may not be agreeable to some and we wanted this resolution not to be controversial in regard to such matters. Therefore we have laid down no theoretical words and I take it there can be no dispute about it. Some people have pointed out to me that our mentioning a republic may somewhat displease the rulers of Indian States. It is possible that this may displease them. But I want to make it clear personally, and the House knows that I do not believe in the monarchical system anywhere and that in the world today monarchy is a fast disappearing institution. Nevertheless it is not a question of my personal belief in this matter. Our view in regard to these Indian States has been, for many years, first of all that the people of those States must share completely in the freedom to come. It is quite inconceivable to me that there should be different standards and degrees of freedom as between the people in the States and the people outside the States. In what manner the States will be parts of that Union, that is a matter for this House to consider with the representatives of the States. And I hope in all matters relating to the States, this House will deal with the real representatives of the States. We are perfectly willing, I take it, to deal in such matters as appertain to them, with the rulers or their representatives also, but finally when we make a constitution for India, it must be through the representatives of the people of the States as with the rest of India, who are present here. In any event, we may lay down or agree that the measure of freedom must be the same in the States as elsewhere. It is a possibility and personally I should like a measure of uniformity too in regard to the apparatus and machinery of government. Nevertheless, this is a point to be cons dered in cooperation and in consultation with States. I do not wish, and I imagine this Constituent Assembly will not like, to impose anything on the States against their will. If the people of a particular State desire to have a certain form of administration, even though it might be monarchical, it is open to them to have it. The House will remember that even in the British Commonwealth of Nations today, Eire is a republic and yet in many ways it is a member of the British Commonwealth. So, it is a conceivable thing. What will happen, I do not know, because that is partly for this House and partly for others to decide. There is no incongruity or impossibility about a certain definite form of administration in the States,

provided there is complete freedom and responsible government there and the people really are in charge. If monarchical figure-heads are approved by the people of the States, of a particular State, whether I like it or not, I certainly will not like to interfere. So I wish to make it clear that so far as this resolution or declaration is concerned, it does not interfere in any way with any future work that this Constituent Assembly may do, with any future negotiations that it may undertake. Only in one sense, if you like, it limits our work, if you call that a limitation, i.e., we adhere to certain fundamental propositions which are laid down in this declaration. Those fundamental propositions, I submit, are not controversial in any real sense of the word. Nobody challenges them in India and nobody ought to challenge them and if anybody does challenge, well, we accept that challenge and we hold our position.

Well, Sir, we are going to make a Constitution for India and it is obvious that what we are going to do in India is going to have a powerful effect on the rest of the world, not only because a new free independent nation comes out into the arena of the world, but because of the very fact that India is such a country that by virtue, not only of her large size and population, but of her enormous resources and her ability to exploit those resources, she can immediately play an important and a vital part in world affairs. Even today, on the verge of freedom as we are today, India has begun to play an important part in world affairs.[5] Therefore, it is right that the framers of our constitution should always bear this larger international aspect in mind.

We approach the world in a friendly way. We want to make friends with all countries. We want to make friends, in spite of the long history of conflict in the past, with England also. The House knows that recently I paid a visit to England. I was reluctant to go for reasons which the House knows well. But I went because of a personal request from the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I went and I met with courtesy everywhere. And yet at this psychological moment in India's history when we wanted, when we hungered for messages of cheer, friendship and cooperation from all over the world, and more especially from England, because of the past contact and conflict between us, unfortunately, I came back without any message of cheer, but with a large measure of disappointment. I hope that the new difficulties that have arisen, as every one knows, because of the recent statements made by the British Cabinet and by others in authority there, will not come in our way and that we shall yet succeed in going ahead with the cooperation of all

5. In the Interim Government, Nehru extended support to the Indonesian freedom struggle. On 4 December 1946, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation, urged concerted action by members of the United Nations Organisation for ending the Franco regime in Spain. On 8 December 1946, she also opposed the policy of racial discrimination and segregation followed by the Government of South Africa.

of us here and those who have not come. It has been a blow to me, and it has hurt me that just at the moment when we are going to stride ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were mentioned which had not been mentioned previously and new methods of procedure were suggested. I do not wish to challenge the *bona fides* of any person, but I wish to say that whatever the legal aspect of the thing might be, there are moments when law is a very feeble reed to rely upon, when we have to deal with a nation which is full of the passion for freedom. Most of us here during the past many years, for a generation or more, have often taken part in the struggle for India's freedom. We have gone through the valley of the shadow. We are used to it and if necessity arises, we shall go through it again. Nevertheless, through all this long period, we have thought of the time when we shall have an opportunity, not merely to struggle, not merely to destroy, but to construct and create. And now, when it appeared that the time was coming for constructive effort in a free India to which we looked forward with joy, fresh difficulties are placed in our way at such a moment. It shows that, whatever force might be behind all this, people who are able and clever and very intelligent, somehow lack the imaginative daring which should accompany great offices. For, if you have to deal with any people, you have to understand them imaginatively; you should understand them emotionally; and of course, you have also to understand them intellectually. One of the unfortunate legacies of the past has been that there has been no imagination in the understanding of the Indian problem. People have often indulged in, or have presumed to give us advice, not realising that India, as she is constituted today, wants no one's advice and no one's imposition upon her. The only way to influence India is through friendship and cooperation and goodwill. Any attempt at imposition, the slightest trace of patronage, is resented and will be resented. We have tried, I think honestly, in the last few months in spite of the difficulties that have faced us, to create an atmosphere of cooperation. We shall continue that endeavour. But I do very much fear that that atmosphere will be impaired if there is not sufficient and adequate response from others. Nevertheless, because we are bent on great tasks, I hope and trust that we shall continue that endeavour and I do hope that if we continue, we shall succeed. Where we have to deal with our own countrymen, we must continue that endeavour even though in our opinion some countrymen of ours take a wrong path. For, after all, we have to work together in this country and we have inevitably to cooperate, if not today, tomorrow or the day after. Therefore, we have to avoid in the present anything which might create a new difficulty in the creation of that future which we are working for. Therefore, so far as our own countrymen are concerned, we must try our utmost to gain their cooperation in the largest measure. But cooperat on cannot mean the giving up of the fundamental ideals on which we have stood and on which we should stand. It is not cooperation to

surrender everything that has given meaning to our lives. Apart from that, as I said, we seek the cooperation of England even at this stage which is full of suspicion of each other. We feel that if that cooperation is denied, that will be injurious to India, certainly to some extent, probably more so to England and, to some extent, to the world at large. We have just come out of the World War and people talk vaguely and rather wildly of new wars to come. At such a moment this new India is taking birth, renascent, vital, fearless. Perhaps it is a suitable moment for this new birth to take place out of this turmoil in the world. But we have to be clear-eyed at this moment—we, who have this heavy task of constitution-building. We have to think of this tremendous prospect of the present and the greater prospect of the future and not get lost in seeking small gains for this group or that. In this Constituent Assembly we are functioning on a world stage and the eyes of the world are upon us and the eyes of our entire past are upon us. Our past is witness to what we are doing here and though the future is still unborn, the future too somehow looks at us, I think, and so, I would beg of this House to consider this resolution in this mighty prospect of our past, of the turmoil of the present and of the great and unborn future that is going to take place soon. Sir, I beg to move.

11. The Importance of the Constituent Assembly[1]

Whatever form of constitution we decide in the Constituent Assembly will become the constitution of free India whether Britain accepts it or not.

The British Government is thinking that the decisions of the Constituent Assembly are not binding on it. But we have not entered the Constituent Assembly to place our decisions on a silver platter and dance attendance on the British Government for acceptance. We have now altogether stopped looking to London. We know that there are some differences amongst us, but we shall settle them ourselves. We cannot and will not tolerate any outside interference.

India's relations with Britain henceforth will depend on how the British act at present. We want to be friendly with all countries of the world, even with Britain, but only if Britain does not put hindrances in our march towards complete freedom. We want to forget British misdeeds of the past. If the British behaviour towards India at present improves, Britain would reap

1. Speech at Varanasi, 15 December 1946. Based on reports from the *National Herald*, *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times*, 17 December 1946.

favourable results, but if Britain's behaviour towards India does not change she cannot expect good results.

We have advanced so much on the path to freedom that it is not possible for us to retreat.

India is fast marching ahead and India's honour has risen in the estimation of the nations of the world. That was clear from India's grand success at the United Nations Organisation in her case against South Africa.[2] She is establishing connections with many other nations and has sent ambassadors to them.[3] All that shows that India is going to occupy a high place in the comity of nations of the world.

But with such advance India's responsibilities have also increased. We have to look to our problems now with a cool mind. We have not yet attained our freedom. We cannot therefore afford to slacken our efforts or to get entangled in petty quarrels for it is our future that is at stake.

I ask you to unite and not to be discouraged and lose hope or patience for no power on earth can stop you from reaching the cherished goal of freedom. You must be sure in your mind that the British Government can no longer rule this country. During the transitional period many undesirable happenings can take place. Therefore the deplorable events which took place were a temporary phase and peculiar to the period of transition. There might be some who would create disturbances but the duty of the people must be clear to them. You have to fight mischief and stand up in face of trouble with courage, not forgetting the background and the prospect.

The Congress fought the British Government for nearly 26 years, but at no stage did the Congress preach hatred against the British people. The British people even now can go about quite freely because our struggle is not against individuals but against their rule. Congress struggle was never against any community or religion. The Muslim League is preaching that its direct action is aimed both at the Congress and the British Government but actually it is causing hatred between the communities and murder of innocent people of Bengal, Bihar and Bombay. I want to ask you how near has such a direct action taken the Muslim Leaguers to their goal of Pakistan. They have achieved nothing but hatred among a people, who had been living in peace for centuries.

Pakistan is not the right solution of the communal problem. Even if the country were divided, crores of Hindus and Muslims would continue to live in Pakistan and Hindustan without any rights of citizenship and the communal problem would remain still unsolved. The idea of exchange of population on such a vast scale is absolutely ridiculous.

2. See *post*, section 10(I), item 23.
3. K.P.S. Menon was appointed India's ambassador to China on 22 October 1946, and Asaf Ali to the United States of America on 6 December 1946.

Churchill in his speech in the House of Commons said that the British forces should not be used to suppress one community against another.[4] The Congress has also made it clear on so many occasions that British forces are not wanted in India. In fact, the Congress wants them to quit as early as possible for with their withdrawal many of India's difficulties will automatically disappear.

4. In his speech in the House of Commons on 12 December 1946, Churchill said, "...we must not allow British troops or British officers in the Indian Army to become agencies and instruments of enforcing Caste Hindu domination upon 90,000,000 Muslims and 60,000,000 untouchables."

12. No External Power Can Dissolve the Constituent Assembly[1]

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Dhulekar has moved a strange amendment.[2] He has taken it for granted that we would continue sitting until we finish our work. He has not understood the meaning of the Rule. It says in unequivocal terms that no external power can dissolve this Constituent Assembly. That is the main point. What we do or not do is in our hands. Mr. Dhulekar says that we should not dissolve it; but the fact is that the Constituent Assembly can repeal its own rules. Any decision today that we should never dissolve has no meaning. You can change the rules whenever you desire by a majority vote.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the whole purpose of this Rule is to prevent external authority from dissolving this Constituent Assembly and also preventing any casual majority from doing the same. Obviously, you cannot take away the power from the House itself to do what it chooses in regard to it. Two-thirds is a big enough figure, and if the House bears in mind that this is of the whole number, then it is certainly a tremendous check. What Mr. Dhulekar imagines is some change on the moderate side, but it may equally be something of a revolutionary type. It may or may not be—but it might vary in either direction. The whole point, therefore, of Mr. Dhulekar's

1. This debate on the report of the committee on rules of procedure took place in the Constituent Assembly on 21 December 1946. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report,* Vol. 1, 1946, 9 to 23 December 1946, p. 180.
2. R.V. Dhulekar suggested, that after the words "The Assembly shall not be dissolved" the words "unless and until the final constitution for India has been framed", be substituted for "until by a resolution assented to by at least two-thirds of the whole number of the Assembly." The amendment was rejected.

argument is wrong. He has misconceived the whole Rule. This Rule is to prevent any intervention from any external authority and vesting the power to dissolve in the Constituent Assembly itself.

P.R. Thakur: What do you mean by "external authority"? You call yourself a "sovereign Body" and still you are afraid of external authority. It is, I say, a weakness.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am afraid I do not understand this question. "External authority" refers to a hundred things—to armies, to Viceroys, to Secretaries of State, to governments, etc. There is a lot of confusion about this question of sovereign authority. Sometimes words are used in a rather loose sense. Obviously, we are not sovereign in the sense that a State is sovereign. We are only sovereign subject to certain limitations under which we are functioning today. Some of those limitations are external, some internal. But even under those limitations nobody can dissolve this Assembly. Nobody can remove it except forcibly. In such a case, we can do what we choose till some superior force puts us into inaction. This sort of thing might happen even to a sovereign State.

13. On the Urgency to Pass the Resolution on Aims and Objects of the Constituent Assembly[1]

Mr. President, six weeks have passed since I moved this resolution.[2] I had thought then that the resolution would be discussed and passed within two or three days, but later the House decided to postpone it in order to give time to others to think over it. The decision to postpone an important resolution like this was probably not to the liking of others like me but I did not doubt that the decision was sound and proper. The anxiety and impatience in our hearts was not for the passage of the resolution, which was simply a symbol, but to attain the high aims which were enshrined in it. It is also our intense desire to march on with all others and reach our goal with millions of Indians. Therefore, it was advisable to postpone the resolution and to afford ample opportunity not only to this House but also to the

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 22 January 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. II, 1947, 20 to 25 January 1947, pp. 296-303.
2. See *ante*, item 10.

country in general to think over it. The sense of all amendments and specially the amendment moved by Dr. Jayakar[3] was generally for postponement. I am grateful to Dr. Jayakar for the withdrawal of his amendment and I thank the others also who have withdrawn their amendments. Many members have spoken on the resolution. Their number may be thirty or forty or more. Almost all of them have supported it without any criticism. Some of them, of course, have drawn our attention to some particular matters. I am of opinion that if a plebiscite of the crores of people of India is taken, all of them will be found to stand for the resolution, though there might be some who would lay more or less emphasis on some particular aspect of the resolution. The resolution was meant to clothe in words the desire of crores of Indians and it was very carefully worded so as to avoid any strongly controversial issue. There is no need to say a great deal about this but, with your permission, I would like to draw your attention to some points. One of the reasons for the postponement of the resolution was that we wished that our brothers who had not come here, should be in a position to decide to come in. They have had a full month to consider the matter but I regret that they have not yet decided to come. However, as I have already said at the outset, we will keep the door open for them and they will be welcomed up to the last moment, and we will give them and others, who have a right to come in, every opportunity for coming in. But it is clear that, while the door remains open, our work cannot be held up. It has, therefore, become indispensable for us to proceed further and carry the resolution to its logical conclusion. I have hopes that even at this stage those, who are absent, would decide to come in.

Some of us, even though they are in agreement with this resolution, were in favour of postponing some other business too so that the absentees might not find any obstacle in their way to come in. I am in sympathy with this suggestion but in spite of this I am at a loss to understand how this suggestion could be put forward. That is a question of waiting; not that of postponing the resolution. We have waited for six long weeks. This is no matter of weeks; ages have slipped by while we have been waiting. How long are we to wait now? Many of us who waited have since passed away and many are nearing the end of their lives. We have waited enough and now we cannot wait any longer. We are to further the work of the Assembly, speed up the pace and finish our work soon. You should bear in mind that this Assembly is not only to pass resolutions; I may point out that the constitution, which we frame, is not an end by itself; but it would be only the basis for further work.

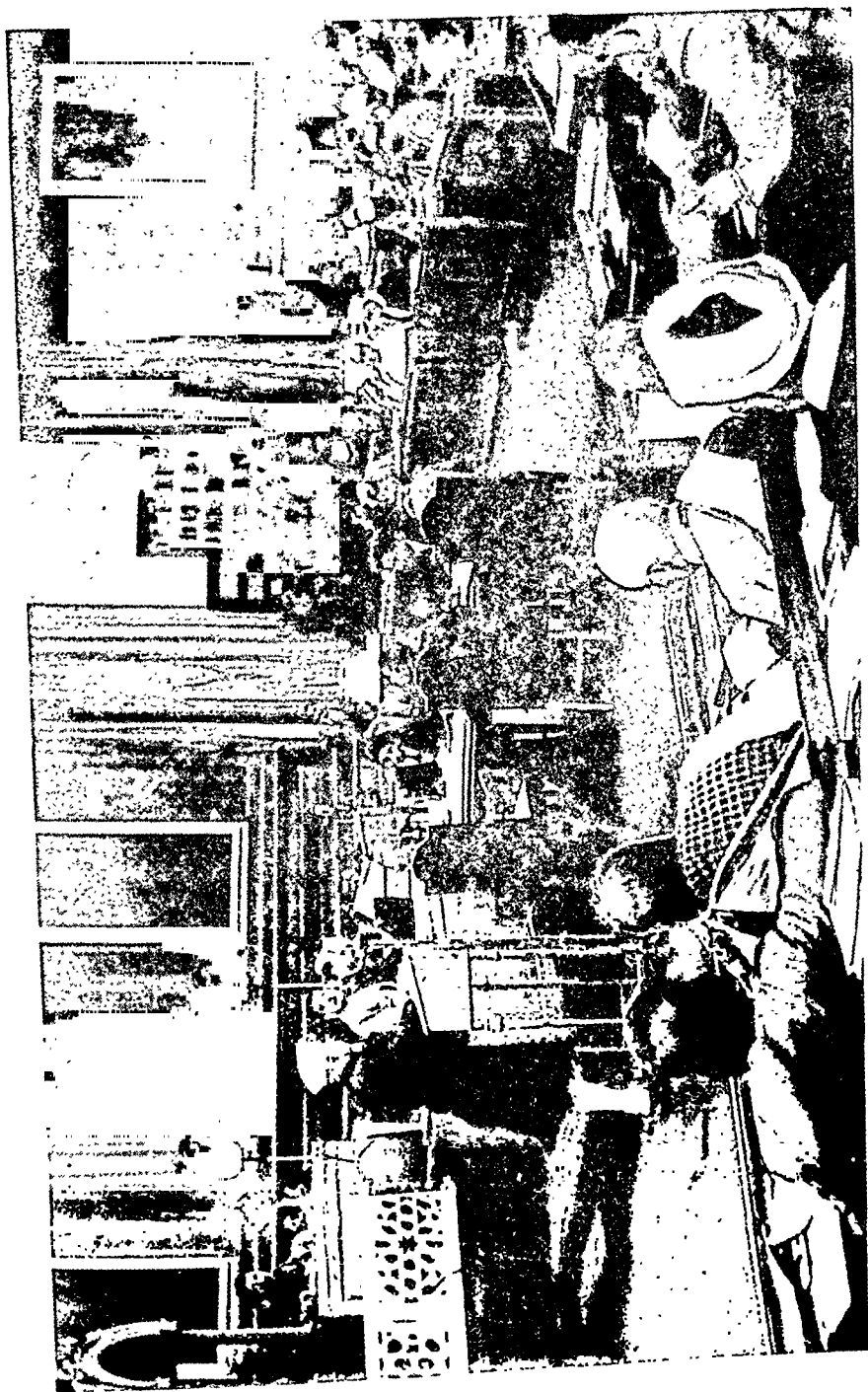
3. Jayakar sought postponement of the resolution on the ground that the Assembly had no power to lay down the fundamentals of the constitution *till the representatives of* the Muslim League and the Indian States had joined it.

The first task of this Assembly is to free India through a new constitution to feed the starving people and clothe the naked masses, and to give every Indian the fullest opportunity to develop himself according to his capacity. This is certainly a great task. Look at India today. We are sitting here and there is despair in many places, and unrest in many cities. The atmosphere is surcharged with these quarrels and feuds which are called communal disturbances, and unfortunately we sometimes cannot avoid them. But at present the greatest and most important question in India is how to solve the problem of the poor and the starving. Wherever we turn, we are confronted with this problem. If we cannot solve this problem soon, all our paper constitutions will become useless and purposeless. Keeping this aspect in view, who could suggest to us to postpone and wait?

A point has been raised from one side that some ideas contained in the resolution do not commend themselves to the Rulers of the States, because they conflict with the powers of the Princes.[4] A suggestion has also been made to postpone the decision about the States in the absence of their representatives.[5] It is a fact they are not present here but if we wait for them it is not possible for us to finish the work even at the end of the Constituent Assembly according to the plan. This is impossible. Our scheme was not that they should come in at the end. We invited them to come in at the beginning. If they come, they are welcome. Nobody is going to place any obstacles. If there is any hesitation, it is on their part only. A month ago you form d a committee to get into touch with their representatives.[6] We were always anxious to discuss with them although we did not get any opportunity for it. That is no fault of ours. We did not ask for time. We want to finish our work as early as possible. I am informed they complain of the following words contained in the resolution:

Sovereignty belongs to the people and rests with the people.

That is to say, the final decision should rest with the people of the States. They object to this. It is certainly a surprising objection. It may not be very surprising if those people who have lived in an atmosphere of mediaevalism

4. Ramaswamy Aiyer declared on 19 December 1946 that the Indian States might find it difficult to cooperate with the Constituent Assembly if it took the line that sovereignty resided in the people of the States and that on the extinction of paramountcy the Crown would have ceded sovereignty to the people.
5. A statement was issued on 15 December 1946 by the Indian States Negotiating Committee expressing regret at the 'Independence' resolution for raising "many fundamental issues which...cannot and should not be considered or decided by the Constituent Assembly in the absence of the Indian States representatives...."
6. On 21 December 1946 a Constituent Assembly Negotiating Committee consisting of Azad, Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, P. Sitaramayya, Shankarrao Deo and N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar was set up to confer with the Negotiating Committee of the Princes Chamber on the distribution and the method of election to the Constituent Assembly of 93 representatives of the Indian States.

MOVING THE OBJECTIVES RESOLUTION IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, 13 DECEMBER 1946

AT THE AIRPORT WITH BALDEV SINGH BEFORE LEAVING FOR LONDON, 1 DECEMBER 1946

do not give up their cherished illusions, but in the modern age how can a man believe for a moment in the divine and despotic rights of a human being? I fail to understand how any Indian, whether he belongs to a State or to any other part of the country, could dare utter such things. It is scandalous now to put forward an idea which originated in the world hundreds of years ago and was buried deep in the earth long before our present age. However, I would respectfully tell them to desist from saying such things. They are putting a wrong thing before the world and by doing so they are lowering their own status and weakening their own position. At least this Assembly is not prepared to damage its very foundation and, if it does so, it will shake the very basis of our whole constitution.

We claim in this resolution to frame a free and democratic Indian republic. A question may be asked what relation will that republic bear to other countries of the world? What would be its relations with England, the British Commonwealth and other countries? This resolution means that we are completely free and are not included in any group except the Union of Nations which is now being formed in the world. The truth is that the world has totally changed. The meanings of words too are changing. Today any man who can think a little will come to the conclusion that the only way to remove the doubts and dangers from the world is to unite all the nations and ask them to work together and help each other. The organisation of the United Nations is not free from big gaps and fissures. Thousands of difficulties lie ahead and a great deal of suspicion exists between countries. I have already said that we are not thinking in terms of isolating ourselves from the world. We will work in complete cooperation with other countries. It is not an easy thing to work in cooperation with England or the British Commonwealth, and yet we are prepared to do so. We will forget our old quarrels, strive to achieve our complete independence and stretch our hands of friendship to other countries, but that friendship shall in no case mar or weaken our freedom.

This is not a resolution of war; it is simply to put our legitimate rights before the world; and in doing so if we are challenged, we will not hesitate in accepting that challenge. But after all, this is a resolution of goodwill and compromise among the people of India, whatever their community or religion and with the different countries of the world including England and the British Commonwealth of Nations. The resolution claims to be on friendly terms with all and it has been put before you with that motive and intention. I hope you will accept it.

A friend has suggested that it would be advisable to move the resolution just on the eve of the Independence Day which is due to come after four days only. But I will ask him if it is proper to delay a proper thing even for a moment? Not a moment's postponement is advisable and we should finish our work as soon as possible.

This resolution which has been put before you is in a new form and in a new shape, but I would like to tell you that it has a long trail of resolutions, pledges and declarations including the world-famed resolutions of "Independence" and "Quit India" behind it. It is time to fulfil our pledges which we made from time to time. How are these pledges to be fulfilled? The right answer lies with you and I hope you will not only accept the resolution but also fulfil it as you fulfil a solemn pledge.

One thing more I would like to tell you. We have been confronted and will again be confronted with various questions. Persons of various groups, communities, and interests would look at it from different points of view, and diverse questions and problems would be raised by them, but we should all bear in mind that we should not, on the eve of independence, allow ourselves to be carried away by petty matters. If India goes down all will go down; if India thrives, all will thrive and if India lives, all will live including the parties, communities and groups.

With your permission I would like to say something in English also.

Mr. President, it was my proud privilege, Sir, six weeks ago, to move this resolution before this Hon'ble House. I felt the weight and solemnity of that occasion. It was not a mere form of words that I placed before the House, carefully chosen as those words were. But those words and the resolution represented something far more; they represented the depth of our being; they represented the agony and hopes of the nation coming at last to fruition. As I stood here on that occasion I felt the past crowding round me, and I felt also the future taking shape. We stood on the razor's edge of the present and, as I was speaking, I was addressing not only this Hon'ble House, but the millions of India, who were vastly interested in our work. And because I felt that we were coming to the end of an age, I had a sense of our forbears watching this undertaking of ours and possibly blessing it, if we moved aright, and the future, of which we became trustees, became almost a living thing, taking shape and moving before our eyes. It was a great responsibility to be trustees of the future, and it was some responsibility also to be inheritors of the great past of ours. And between that great past and the great future which we envisage, we stood on the edge of the present and the weight of that occasion, I have no doubt, impressed itself upon this Hon'ble House.

So, I placed this resolution before the House, and I had hoped that it could be passed in a day or two and we could start our other work immediately. But after a long debate this House decided to postpone further consideration of this resolution. May I confess that I was a little disappointed because I was impatient that we should go forward? I felt that we were not true to the pledges that we had taken by lingering on the road. It was a bad beginning that we should postpone even such an important resolution about objectives. Would that imply that our future work would go along slowly and be postponed from time to time? Nevertheless, I have no doubt that the

decision this House took in its wisdom in postponing this resolution was a right decision, because we have always balanced two factors, one, the urgent necessity in reaching our goal, and the other, that we should reach it in proper time and with as great a unanimity as possible. It was right, therefore, if I may say with all respect, that this House decided to adjourn consideration of this motion and thus not only demonstrated before the world our earnest desire to have all those people here who have not so far come in here, but also to assure the country and everyone else, how anxious we were to have the cooperation of all. Since then six weeks have passed, and during these weeks there has been plenty of opportunity for those, who wanted to come. Unfortunately, they have not yet decided to come and they still hover in this state of indecision. I regret that, and all I can say is this, that we shall welcome them at any future time when they may wish to come. But it should be made clear without any possibility of misunderstanding that no work will be held up in future, whether anyone comes or not. There has been waiting enough. Not only waiting six weeks, but many in this country have waited for years and years, and the country has waited for some generations now. How long are we to wait? And if we, some of us, who are more prosperous can afford to wait, what about the waiting of the hungry and the starving? This resolution will not feed the hungry or the starving, but it brings a promise of many things—it brings the promise of freedom, it brings the promise of food and opportunity for all. Therefore, the sooner we set about it the better. So we waited for six weeks, and during these six weeks the country thought about it, pondered over it, and other countries also, and other people who are interested have thought about it. Now we have come back here to take up the further consideration of this resolution. We have had a long debate and we stand on the verge of passing it. I am grateful to Dr. Jayakar and Mr. Sahaya[7] for having withdrawn their amendments. Dr. Jayakar's purpose was served by the postponing of this resolution, and it appears now that there is no one in this House who does not accept fully this resolution as it is. It may be, some would like it to be slightly differently worded or the emphasis placed more on this part or on that part. But taking it as a whole, it is a resolution which has already received the full assent of this House, and there is little doubt that it has received the full assent of the country.

There have been some criticisms of it, notably, from some of the Princes. Their first criticism has been that such a resolution should not be passed in the absence of the representatives of the States. In part I agree with that

7. Syamanandan Sahaya (1900-1957); zamindar and industrialist; member, Bihar Legislative Council, 1937-39; sponsored Bihar Tenancy Act; Chairman, Bihar Provincial Cooperative Bank; President, Bihar Chamber of Commerce; member, Standing Committee of Labour, Government of India; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-57.

criticism, that is to say, I should have liked all the States being properly represented here, the whole of India—every part of India being properly represented here—when we pass this resolution. But if they are not here it is not our fault. It is largely the fault of the scheme under which we are functioning, and we have this choice before us. Are we to postpone our functioning because some people cannot be here? That would be a dreadful thing if we stopped not only this resolution, but possibly so much else, because representatives of the States are not here. So far as we are concerned, they can come in at the earliest possible moment. We will welcome them if they send proper representatives of the States. So far as we are concerned, even during the last six weeks or a month, we have made some effort to get into touch with the committee representing the States rulers to find a way for their proper representation here. It is not our fault that there has been any delay. We are anxious to get everyone in, whether it is the representatives of the Muslim League or the States or anyone else. We shall continue to persevere in this endeavour so that this House may be as fully representative of the country as it is possible to be. So, we cannot postpone this resolution or anything else because some people are not here.

Another point has been raised; the idea of the sovereignty of the people, which is enshrined in this resolution, does not commend itself to certain rulers of Indian States. That is a surprising objection and if I may say so, if that objection is raised in all seriousness by anybody, be he a Ruler or a minister, it is enough to condemn the Indian States system of every Ruler or a minister, that exists in India. It is a scandalous thing for any man to say, however highly placed he may be, that he is here by special divine dispensation to rule over human beings today. That is a thing which is an intolerable presumption on any man's part, and it is a thing which this House will never allow and will repudiate if it is put before it. We have heard a lot about this Divine Right of Kings, we had read a lot about it in past histories and we had thought that we had heard the last of it and that it had been put an end to and buried deep down into the earth long ages ago. If any individual in India or elsewhere raises it today, he would be doing so without any relation to the present in India. So, I would suggest to such persons in all seriousness that, if they want to be respected or considered with any measure of friendliness, no such idea should be even hinted at, much less said. On this there is going to be no compromise.

But, as I made plain on the previous occasion when I spoke, this resolution makes it clear that we are not interfering in the internal affairs of the States. I even said that we are not interfering with the system of monarchy in the States, if the people of the States so want it. I gave the example of the Irish Republic in the British Commonwealth and it is conceivable to me that within the Indian republic, there might be monarchies if the people so desire. That is entirely for them to determine. This resolution and, presumably, the

constitution that we make, will not interfere with that matter. Inevitably it will be necessary to bring about uniformity in the freedom of the various parts of India, because it is inconceivable to me that certain parts of India should have democratic freedom and certain others should be denied it. That cannot be. That will give rise to trouble, just as in the wide world today there is trouble because some countries are free and some are not. Much more trouble will there be if there is freedom in parts of India and lack of freedom in other parts of India.

But we are not laying down in this resolution any strict system in regard to the governance of the Indian States. All that we say is this that they, or such of them as are big enough to form unions or group themselves into small unions, will be autonomous units with a very large measure of freedom to do as they choose, subject no doubt to certain central functions in which they will cooperate with the Centre, in which they will be represented in the Centre and in which the Centre will have control. So that, in a sense, this resolution does not interfere with the inner working of those units. They will be autonomous and, as I have said, if those units choose to have some kind of constitutional monarchy at their head, they would be welome to do so. For my part, I am for a republic in India as anywhere else. But whatever my views may be on that subject, it is not my desire to impose my will on others; whatever the views of this House may be on this subject, I imagine that it is not the desire of this House to impose its will in these matters.

So, the objection of the Ruler of an Indian State to this resolution becomes an objection, in theory, to the theoretical implications and the practical implications of the doctrine of sovereignty of the people. To nothing else does anyone object. That is an objection which cannot stand for an instant. We claim in this resolution to frame a constitution for a Sovereign, Independent, Indian Republic—necessarily Republic. What else can we have in India? Whatever the States may have or may not have, it is impossible and inconceivable and undesirable to think in any other terms but in terms of the republic in India.

Now, what relation will that republic bear to the other countries of the world, to England and to the British Commonwealth and the rest? For a long time past we have taken a pledge on Independence Day that India must sever her connection with Great Britain, because that connection had become an emblem of British domination. At no time have we thought in terms of isolating ourselves in this part of the world from other countries or of being hostile to countries which have dominated over us. On the eve of this great occasion, when we stand on the threshold of freedom, we do not wish to carry a trail of hostility with us against any other country. We want to be friendly to all. We want to be friendly with the British people and the British Commonwealth of Nations.

But what I would like this House to consider is this: When these words and these labels are fast changing their meaning and in the world today there is no isolation, you cannot live apart from the others. You must cooperate or you must fight. There is no middle way. We wish for peace. We do not want to fight any nation if we can help it. The only possible real objective that we, in common with other nations, can have is the objective of co-operating in building up some kind of world structure, call it 'One world', call it what you like. The beginnings of this world structure have been laid down in the United Nations Organisation. It is feeble yet; it has many defects; nevertheless, it is the beginning of the world structure. And India has pledged herself to cooperate in that work.

Now, if we think of that structure and our cooperation with other countries in achieving it, where does the question come of our being tied up with this Group of Nations or that Group? Indeed, the more groups and blocs are formed, the weaker will that great structure become.

Therefore, in order to strengthen that big structure, it is desirable for all countries not to insist, not to lay stress, on separate groups and separate blocs. I know that there are such separate groups and blocs today and because they exist today, there is hostility between them, and there is even talk of war among them. I do not know what the future will bring to us, whether peace or war. We stand on the edge of a precipice and there are various forces which pull us on one side in favour of cooperation and peace, and on the other, push us towards the precipice of war and disintegration. I am not prophet enough to know what will happen, but I do know that those who desire peace must deprecate separate blocs which necessarily become hostile to other blocs. Therefore, India, insofar as it has a foreign policy, has declared that it wants to remain independent and free of all these blocs and that it wants to cooperate on equal terms with all countries. It is a difficult position because, when people are full of fear of each other, any person who tries to be neutral is suspected of sympathy with the other party. We can see that in India and we can see that in the wider sphere of world politics. Recently an American statesman[8] criticised India in words which show how lacking in knowledge and understanding even the statesmen of America are. Because we follow our own policy, this group of nations thinks that we are siding with the other and that group of nations thinks that we are siding with this. That is bound to happen. If we seek to be a free, independent, democratic republic, it is not to dissociate ourselves from other countries, but rather as a free nation to cooperate in the fullest measure with other countries for peace and freedom, to cooperate with Britain, with the British

8. On 19 January 1947, John Foster Dulles alleged that Soviet leaders encouraged revolutionary movements in Dutch Indonesia and Indo-China and had a strong influence in India through the "Interim Hindu Government".

Commonwealth of Nations, with the United States of America, with the Soviet Union, and with all other countries, big and small. But real cooperation would only come between us and these other nations when we know that we are free to cooperate and are not imposed upon and forced to cooperate. So long as there is the slightest trace of compulsion, there can be no cooperation.

Therefore, I commend this resolution to the House and I commend this resolution, if I may say so, not only to this House but to the world at large so that it can be perfectly clear that it is a gesture of friendship to all, and that behind it there lies no hostility. We have suffered enough in the past. We have struggled sufficiently, we may have to struggle again, but under the leadership of a very great personality we have sought always to think in terms of friendship and goodwill towards others, even those who opposed us. How far we have succeeded we do not know, because we are weak human beings. Nevertheless, the impress of that message has found a place in the hearts of millions of people of this country, and even when we err and go astray, we cannot forget it. Some of us may be little men, some may be big, but whether we are small men or big, for the moment we represent a great cause and therefore something of the shadow of greatness falls upon us. Today in this Assembly we represent a mighty cause and this resolution that I have placed before you gives some semblance of that cause. We shall pass this resolution, and I hope that this resolution will lead us to a constitution on the lines suggested by this resolution. I trust that the constitution itself will lead us to the real freedom that we have clamoured for and that real freedom in turn will bring food to our starving people, clothing for them, housing for them and all manner of opportunities of progress, that it will lead also to the freedom of the other countries of Asia, because in a sense, however unworthy we may be we have become—let us recognise it—the leaders of the freedom movement of Asia, and whatever we do, we should think of ourselves in these larger terms. When some petty matter divides us and we have difficulties and conflicts amongst ourselves over these small matters, let us remember not only this resolution but this great responsibility that we shoulder, the responsibility of the freedom of 400 million people of India, the responsibility of the leadership of a large part of Asia, the responsibility of being some kind of guide to vast numbers of people all over the world. It is a tremendous responsibility. If we remember it, perhaps we may not bicker so much over this seat or that post, over some small gain for this group or that. The one thing that should be obvious to all of us is this that there is no group in India, no party, no religious community, which can prosper if India does not prosper. If India goes down, we go down, all of us, whether we have a few seats more or less, whether we get a slight advantage or we do not. But if it is well with India, if India lives as a vital free country, then it is well with all of us to whatever community or religion we might belong.

We shall frame the constitution, and I hope it will be a good constitution, but does anyone in this House imagine that, when a free India emerges, it will be bound down by anything that even this House might lay down for it? A free India will see the bursting forth of the energy of a mighty nation. What it will do and what it will not, I do not know, but it will not consent to be bound down by anything. Some people imagine that what we do now may not be touched for 10 years or 20 years; if we do not do it today, we will not be able to do it later. That seems to me a complete misapprehension. I am not placing before the House what I want done and what I do not want done, but I should like the House to consider that we are on the eve of revolutionary changes, revolutionary in every sense of the word, because when the spirit of a nation breaks its bonds, it functions in peculiar ways and it should function in strange ways. It may be that the constitution this House may frame may not satisfy that free India. This House cannot bind down the next generation or the people who will duly succeed us in this task. Therefore, let us not trouble ourselves too much about the petty details of what we do, those details will not survive for long, if they are achieved in conflict. What we achieve in unanimity, what we achieve by cooperation is likely to survive. What we gain here and there by conflict and by overbearing manners and by threats will not survive long. It will only leave a trail of bad blood. And so now I commend this resolution to the House and may I read the last para of this resolution? But one word more, Sir, before I read it. India is a great country, great in her resources, great in her manpower, great in her potential, in every way. I have little doubt that a free India on every plane will play a big part on the world stage, even on the narrowest plane of material power, and I should like India to play that great part in that plane. Nevertheless today there is a conflict in the world between forces in different planes. We hear a lot about the atom bomb and the various kinds of energy that it represents and in essence today there is a conflict in the world between two things, that atom bomb and what it represents and the spirit of humanity. I hope that while India will no doubt play a great part in all the material spheres, she will always lay stress on that spirit of humanity, and I have no doubt in my mind that ultimately in this conflict that is confronting the world the human spirit will prevail over the atom bomb. May this resolution bear fruit and may the time come when, in the words of this resolution, this ancient land attains its rightful and honoured place in the world and makes its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

3

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM

IV. The States Negotiating Committee

1. To C. Rajagopalachari[1]

New Delhi
29th November, 1946

My dear Rajaji,

I think I told you and our other colleagues about my conversation with the Nawab of Bhopal regarding the States Consultative Committee. He said that the scheme put forward by the Political Department was not much good and he was not sorry that we had rejected it. But some means should be found for consultation between our Government and the States Governments in matters of common concern. He would prefer, he added, that this matter might be tackled directly as between us and the States. He suggested therefore that we might draw up some scheme which could then be considered by the States or at any rate by him as Chancellor. He could consult others about it. I suppose it will have to come up before the Political Department some time or other.

I do not see how we can say no to the Nawab of Bhopal. As he has asked us to prepare some scheme for the Consultative Committee, we should formulate some proposals. I wonder if you would be good enough to undertake this job during the next few days. When I come back we should consider this together.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Election of the States Committee of the Constituent Assembly[1]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Resolution that has been placed by Mr. Munshi before the House is a very limited Resolution.[2] It is meant only to fix the

1. 21 December 1946. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. 1, 1946, 9 to 23 December 1946, pp. 154-155. The States Committee was set up on 21 December 1946.
2. K.M. Munshi's resolution recommended the setting up of a committee consisting of Azad, Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shankarrao Deo and Gopalaswami Ayyangar to confer with the Negotiating Committee of the Chamber of Princes to determine the distribution of seats in the Assembly and to decide the manner in which the States should select representatives for the Assembly.

method of representation in this Assembly for the representatives of the States, and not to deal with the innumerable problems which the States have in common with the rest of India. Mr. Lahiri mentioned the case of one or two States[3] where political struggles are going on. Obviously, this Committee will have nothing to do with the internal structure of the States. That matter will have to be considered, I hope, by us when the States representatives come. We can confer with them and discuss and settle these matters; so we have for the present only to consider the method of their representation.

Now, Sir, the amendments that have been moved in regard to members of the Depressed Classes or the *adibasis* coming in,[4] seem to ignore the fact that we are only considering this limited problem. Obviously the Depressed Classes have their particular interests to be protected, but that question does not come in before this Committee. This Committee representing, if I may say so, that part of India which is not the States, will meet representatives of the Rulers. I might say frankly that we have to meet the Rulers Negotiating Committee. I think there should have been on the Negotiating Committee[5] representatives of the people of the States, and I think even now that Negotiating Committee, if it wants to do the right thing, should include some such representatives but I feel that we cannot insist upon this at this stage. Unless we appoint a Committee to negotiate this matter the proper representation of the States representatives may not be secured. Therefore, in this Resolution we have said not only that we shall meet the Negotiating Committee set up by the Chamber of Princes but also the representatives of other States who are probably not included therein, and as I have already explained, the object of our meeting them is to ensure a proper method of representation for the States people. If that is so, and if you try and think of the States as they are, you will see that, apart from some States which are big, there will be many small States whom we may have to get represented by doing some kind of grouping or some other way of representing them, because for each State we may not be able to give one representative. Just see how many States there are and how many representatives will be required. States like Hyderabad and Kashmir will get adequate representation on the population basis. Some of the big States may get two, three or four, but most of them just barely one. Many of them may not even get that one. We may have to group them or devise some method. These are our problems. Apart from these, no other problem affecting any

3. Somnath Lahiri stated that in most of the States a "terrible regime of repression" was being "conducted by the Rulers". He particularly mentioned Kashmir and Hyderabad.
4. P.R. Thakur called for representation of the depressed classes on the committee and Jaipal Singh urged the inclusion of an *adibasi* in the committee.
5. The States Negotiating Committee was set up on 10 June 1946 to negotiate on behalf of the Indian States with the Committee of the Constituent Assembly.

particular class or even affecting the internal structure of the States will come up before this Committee. Those problems will have to come up before this Assembly at a later stage, when the States representatives are also here.

I submit that the question of any particular group—communal, provincial or State—coming into this Committee will not arise. We should take, of course, competent men who are here, but in this particular matter you cannot enter into group representation, because if we do there is no particular reason why we should deny that representation to the many separate interests that exist here. If you take the Travancore State, thinking only on religious lines, you will find a very great part of the population of the State consists of Christians—Roman Catholics.[6] Now, Travancore is a very important State, the people of which have often come into conflict with the Government authorities. Kashmir, of course, is another important State. In this way, you will get into enormous difficulty if you are going to think of people being represented on a communal basis in this small Committee. (Obviously, this Committee ought to be a small Committee because it will be very difficult to deal with the representatives of the Rulers if it is a large Committee.) This Committee should not, therefore, be formed on the basis of separate interests, as suggested by some people.

Now, Mr. Jaipal Singh made a statement, from which I beg to differ, and that is that the States People's Conference is not taking sufficient interest in the Orissa States.[7] The States People's Conference has not done all that it should do because the problem is a vast one, but as a matter of fact the Orissa States have been frequently before the States People's Conference and one of our members of the Standing Committee of the States People's Conference comes from there.

Now, some of the amendments moved by Mr. Santhanam and others[8] say that this final authority should remain with this House. They agree, however, to withdraw them if the Chair could give a ruling in this matter. I have no doubt in my mind that the final decision on such matters should vest in this House, and that this Committee should only be a Negotiating

6. Out of a population of 60,70,018, the Christians numbered 19,63,808; of these 2,30,158 were Roman Catholics and 5,60,834 Syrian Christians.
7. Jaipal Singh stated that while the Indian States People's Conference had dealt generally with States in northern, southern, western and central India, it had had hardly anything to do with the Orissa States Agency or the Agencies of Bengal and the North-East Frontier.
8. Santhanam proposed that "this house is the final determining body with regard to every committee we appoint and every other matter of procedure". Somnath Lahiri moved two amendments, providing for the ratification by the Assembly of the final recommendations of the Committee and for negotiations to be conducted on the clear understanding that only the subjects of the States will be eligible to send representatives to the Assembly.

Committee, that it should negotiate and report to this House. If this House does not agree with anything that they have done, they have got to go back and negotiate still further. Of course, in all such matters, a certain discretion is given. For instance, you do give a large measure of authority to your plenipotentiaries to go and negotiate with other countries. The countries have got a right to accept or reject, but normally speaking, when the representatives of two parties come together and discuss a matter and come to an agreement, unless a vital principle is involved, the agreement is accepted because third parties are concerned in it. That will apply to our case also. But I suggest, if possible,—I have not the wording before me, —that it might be possible to have some such words as that the Committee should report to the House.

3. To the Nawab of Bhopal[1]

New Delhi
8 January 1947

My dear Nawab Sahib,
Thank you for your letter of the 4th January enclosing a letter for Gandhiji. I have sent the letter on by messenger to Gandhiji.

2. Today I met Shuaib and had a talk with him. I do not know exactly what Gandhiji had seen. It was something that appeared in the Calcutta papers, probably in the *Hindusthan Standard*. I imagine it was based on a report appearing in *Blitz*[2] which I had casually seen previously and which I read fully only today when Shuaib came here. I have given this copy of *Blitz* to Shuaib. *Blitz* is rather a sensational paper and is apt to exaggerate and give very colourful accounts of events. Sometimes it proceeds on rumour alone. I have found a number of people discussing this report in *Blitz* or other papers and some must have been influenced by it. I myself did not

1. J.N. Collection.
2. *Blitz*, a Bombay journal, reported on 21 December 1946 that when Jinnah met the British Cabinet Ministers, he had with him a letter from the Nawab of Bhopal, categorically expressing the "hostility of the States to the Congress and their solidarity behind the League and other minorities". The Nawab was reported to have added that "together with the Muslim League the Indian Princes would stand for the maintenance of the British connection, either as individual units or as a combined State on a par with the proposed State of Pakistan."

think that the report was a correct one in any detail but that it was probably based on some modicum of fact. I am very glad to have your letter and to find that there was no truth whatever in the report.

3 You complain about Congress newspapers. I suppose this description applies to newspapers which generally support the Congress viewpoint. But there are no Congress newspapers as such. A very unfortunate development in recent years has been the building up of newspaper combines and monopolies. I am entirely opposed to this. I am myself not in good odour with some of these newspapers and, therefore, do not like to interfere with them, but I have often enough in public and otherwise expressed my disapproval of the tendencies in the Indian press. So far as I can I shall certainly try to prevent this degradation of the press.

4. As you know, the Constituent Assembly has appointed a Negotiating Committee to confer with the States Negotiating Committee. We wanted to have a joint meeting soon, but we have been informed that this will not be convenient till early in February. Even if a formal meeting cannot take place, we would very much like an informal discussion with some members of your Committee as early as possible. You will remember telling me that you would prefer informal discussions to begin with. If you think this is at all possible, we shall gladly fix this upon any date suitable to you. We propose to have a meeting of our own Committee probably on the 16th of this month.

5. You will probably get this letter on your birthday. All my good wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. The Scope of the States Committee[1]

Mr. President, Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution :

This Assembly resolves that the Committee constituted by its Resolution of December 21, 1946 (to confer with the Negotiating Committee set up

1. 22 January 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. II, 1947, 20 to 25 January 1947, pp. 304-305.

by the Chamber of Princes and with other representatives of Indian States for certain specified purposes) shall in addition have power to confer with such persons as the Committee thinks fit for the purpose of examining the special problems of Bhutan and Sikkim and to report to the Assembly the result of such examination.

May I point out, Sir, that the copy of this Resolution that has been circulated should be varied slightly in the penultimate line, to read, "for the purpose of examining the special problems of Bhutan and Sikkim and to report to the Assembly".

The House will remember that we passed a resolution in December last appointing a Committee consisting of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Mr. Shankarrao Deo, Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar and myself to confer with the Negotiating Committee set up by the Chamber of Princes and with other representatives of the Indian States for the purpose of

(a) fixing the distribution of the seats in the Assembly not exceeding 93 in number which, in the Cabinet Mission's statement of 16th May, 1946, are reserved for the Indian States, and
(b) fixing the method by which the representatives of the States should be returned to this Assembly and thereafter to report to the Constituent Assembly the result of such negotiations. Further it was resolved that not more than three other Members may be added to this Committee later. This Committee was to consider two matters, fixing and distribution of seats for the States and fixing the method by which the representatives of the States should be returned to the Assembly. The question has arisen as to how we have to deal with certain areas which are not the Indian States. In this Resolution before us, Bhutan and Sikkim are mentioned.

Bhutan is in a sense an independent State under the protection of India, Sikkim is in a sense an Indian State but different from the other. It is not proper to think of Bhutan therefore in the same category as an Indian State. I do not know what the future position of Bhutan might be in relation to India. That is a matter to be determined in consultation and in cooperation with the representatives of Bhutan. There is no question of compulsion in the matter. Now the terms of reference of the Committee you have appointed on the last occasion will not entitle it to tackle any such problem. Those terms are limited to the method of representation in this Assembly and the distribution of seats. I would like to say that there is some objection raised on the part of the Indian princes to the Negotiating Committee as to why the terms of reference have been so limited by us. They have been limited

for obvious reasons—that all the later problems of the Indian States are going to be dealt with by those representatives of the Indian States when they come and it would be absurd for us to come to final decisions with regard to the main problems before the representatives came here. Therefore deliberately we limited the functions of our Negotiating Committee. But in limiting them we prevented them from dealing with other problems which may arise in regard to territories which are not Indian States, specially Bhutan and Sikkim, and this Resolution gives them authority to meet representatives of Bhutan and Sikkim and discuss any special problems that may arise. I want to make it clear, on the one hand, that this Constituent Assembly has every right to discuss problems with even independent States, if necessary. There is nothing to limit our right to discuss our future relations with the independent States but for the moment I am not dealing with that problem. Whatever the position of Bhutan might be, there is no question that we have the power and authority to deal with their representatives. This is in no way trying to lessen the status of Bhutan's present position. Whatever this may be, it will be recognised to be something entirely different to that of the Indian States. We are simply empowering our Committee to deal with the representatives and then to report to this Constituent Assembly the result of those negotiations.

I beg to move this Resolution, Sir.[2]

2. The resolution was passed.

5. Minutes of the Meeting of the States Committee[1]

The Chairman referred to a letter written by the Secretary[2] of the Constituent Assembly to the External Affairs Department asking who exactly are the authorities in Bhutan and Sikkim to whom he should communicate the terms of the resolution passed by the Assembly on 22.1.1947. The point at issue was whether the Constituent Assembly should communicate directly with these two Governments or whether, as suggested by the External Affairs Department, the communication should be sent through that Department.

1. 29 January 1947. *The Framing of India's Constitution (Select Documents)*, (Nasik, 1966), Vol. I, pp. 636-637. Only the speech of Nehru (Chairman) is printed.
2. H.V.R. Iengar.

The Chairman pointed out that there seemed to be no difficulty regarding Sikkim to whose Government Secretary could communicate the resolution direct. As regards Bhutan, the point was not of practical importance as a delegation[3] from Bhutan was coming to Delhi in the course of next week. The Secretary was asked to arrange for a meeting of two or three members of the States Committee, in the first instance, with the Bhutan delegation in consultation with the External Affairs Department. In the meanwhile, the Secretary, External Affairs Department, may formally communicate the resolution to Bhutan; and when the meeting with the delegation takes place, the representatives of the States Committee would also inform them of the resolution.

3. A Bhutanese goodwill mission visited New Delhi on 7 February 1947. Deb-Zinfon Raja Tobgji Dorji and Jigme Palden Dorji were members of the delegation.

4

THE STATES PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

1. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
4 September 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have received a letter from Mr. Abell dated the 2nd September stating that it is the usual custom for Members of the Government, who may be visiting an Indian State, to give previous information of this to the Political Department; also that Members should avoid making speeches of a political nature in the Indian States. As is stated in the letter, this appears to be an old convention. But how far this will hold in present circumstances appears to me to be doubtful. Obviously Members visiting an Indian State or making any speech there would do so with the full sense of their responsibility and would avoid doing or saying anything which would create complications. It must be remembered, however, that many Members of the present Government are intimately associated with the States people's movement. We have tried to help in solving the problems of the States by encouraging cooperation between the Rulers and the people of the States. Our efforts have not always been successful and conflicts sometimes occur within the States between State authorities and the people. You are fully aware of recent happenings in Kashmir in which I was personally involved.[2] It is not possible for me or for any of us suddenly to change colour and forget our past or our present inclinations. We support fully the movement of the States people for their freedom. We want them to realise this as far as possible in cooperation with their Rulers. If this is denied to them, even so we shall want them to be free. Whenever occasion arises, we shall naturally have to give expression to our opinions wherever we might be. This, of course, will be done in a responsible way and so as to ease the situation and not to worsen it.

If I go to a State I am more likely to be a guest of the people there than of the Ruler. I shall feel more at home that way and that has been my practice in the past. There appears to be no particular reason why I should change it. I would like to meet the Ruler to discuss our common problems and to help in bringing about cooperation between him and the people of his State.

If it is possible I would certainly inform the Political Department of an intended visit to a State. Normally I inform the Ruler. But I do not quite understand why we should function in a State under the tutelage of the Political Department. In view of the developing situation in India, it will be more fitting if the Political Department brought itself in line with the present Government. That would have been the normal development. If

1. J.N. Collection.
2. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 412-419.

this is not done, misunderstandings and friction might well arise between the Government and the Political Department.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Relinquishment of the Presidentship[1]

I felt that I should not continue to function as President in the present circumstances, though I propose to remain a member of the Standing Committee of the All India States People's Conference. In my place Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the Vice-President, has naturally been chosen to function as President. Meanwhile, owing to Sheikh Sahib's incarceration in Kashmir prison, he is unable to take charge of his presidential duties. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya will, therefore, act on his behalf till such time as Sheikh Sahib is free to take charge.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 24 September 1946. *National Herald*, 25 September 1946.

3. Congress Policy Towards the States People[1]

I am amazed that there should be anyone who can say that the Congress has not given support to the people of the States. The Praja Mandals and the States People's Conference owe their origin to the interest taken by the Congress.

The resolution is being used as a cover for an attack on the Congress leadership.[2] It is wrong to say that the Congress has done nothing for the States

1. Speech at the Congress session at Meerut, 24 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 25 November 1946.
2. Moving the resolution, Pattabhi Sitaramayya declared that the time had come when the Congress could no longer ignore the problem of the States. The resolution read: "[illegible] the Congress has noted with regret that even now many of the Rulers of the Indian States and their Ministers... are endeavouring to crush the political aspirations of their people and are thus coming into conflict with the vital urge for freedom...."

people. It is obvious that those who say this do not know anything about the history of the Congress. It has always fought for the States people. Achyut Patwardhan has referred to the Spanish war.[3] He has said that while we went to the assistance of Spain we are not doing anything for the people of the States. Nothing could be more untrue. I can tolerate differences of opinion over tactics. My personal opinion is that there should be no difference between States and provinces. I am not, however, clear in mind what form it should take. It is wrong to say that we have not done anything for the Praja Mandals. As a matter of fact, we have built them.

Each one of us has worked actively in the cause of the States people. The speeches made by some speakers gave the impression that they were debating in a college parliament. We have gathered after six and a half years and we have a certain responsibility. These childish arguments do not suit an assembly of battle-scarred veterans.

The amendments moved by members contain two clauses.[4] The first specifies certain States where repression is going on and the second contains an exhortation that we will help the States people and want them to move forward. All these amendments are unnecessary. If we start mentioning individual States it will merely add a long list to the resolution. The second amendment too is meaningless. There is no need of any exhortation for the States people are well-organized and alert. People have demanded that the Congress should interfere in the affairs of Kashmir and Travancore. It is well known that the Congress had passed resolutions on Kashmir and Hyderabad[5] and affairs in these States are under the active consideration of the Working Committee. It is no use making promises or hurling threats

3. Achyut Patwardhan complained on 24 November 1946 that the Congress leaders were not giving proper advice to the people of the States beyond exhorting them to be patient although the Congress had expressed sympathy with far-away Spain. He added that it was imperative that the Congress should categorically declare wholehearted and unstinted support to the States people.
4. Ashoka Mehta moved an amendment which sought to extend unstinted moral support to the people of Kashmir, Travancore and other States who had been subjected to repression and had organised movements of resistance. Jwala Prasad moved an amendment seeking to extend the active support of the Congress to the people of the States in establishing responsible government as an integral part of a free and independent India.
5. The Working Committee, which met in Wardha from 8 to 13 August 1946, considered the proposed constitutional changes in Hyderabad State and regretted that the premier State of India should be so backward politically. The Committee was of opinion that the new *Ain* (constitution) should be withdrawn and replaced by a constitution drawn up with the consent and approval of the people.

   The Working Committee on 19-21 November 1946 expressed its disapproval of the recent repressive activities of the Kashmir authorities and denial of normal civil liberties. The Committee proposed to send a deputation to Kashmir State and invited the State authorities to cooperate in this task.

without taking cognisance of the events that may take place in a particular State. As everybody knows the Congress supports the States people's struggle and will help them.

Mr. Patwardhan has made the allegation that the Congress leaders have prevented the Hyderabad State Congress from launching a struggle. I take personal responsibility for this course of action. I did it as a member of the Standing Committee of the States People's Conference. Congress leaders should not be criticized for this. I gave the advice because I am of opinion that in view of the communal conflagration satyagraha will be harmful. The same advice I will give to others as well. It is, however, an interim advice.

I assure the members that the whole question of the States people is under careful consideration of the members of the Working Committee.

I agree with Mr. Patwardhan that our fight against the British is not over. But the use of the term 'British' is rather vague. It is meaningless to say that our quarrel is with the British people. Our quarrel is against the reactionary British policy. It is against conservatism, feudalism and forces of the dark ages.

I appeal to you to throw out all the amendments and pass the original resolution.

Let me tell you about an angry letter I received a few days ago from a young man. The letter stated that my recent denial that I never threatened to get Bihar villages bombed was a lie because the village of Nagarnausa had been bombed and thousands of Hindus had been killed by Muslim troops. I heard a similar story in Bihar and went to Nagarnausa myself to find out the truth. The village is inhabited by 2,500 Hindus and 1,200 Muslims. During the week of the riots, they both collected in two different parts of the village fearing attack from each other. There were clashes between them during which about 30 Muslims and about 15 Hindus were killed. There were more Muslims killed perhaps because the Muslims were also being attacked from another side by villagers of the surrounding villages. A column of a Madrasi Regiment, consisting of about 24 soldiers, only a few of whom must be Muslims, was sent to the rescue of the stranded Muslims. There was a clash between them and the mob which was standing outside the village during which a few people were killed as a result of firing by this military column.

After they had rescued the Muslims and were escorting them, Hindus tried to attack them on the way. The military column had to fire again. It was getting dark then and they did not know how many of them were killed. The estimate of the casualties nflicted by the military during the three or four times of firing was 40 killed. That might be an underestimate. Actually the figure of casualties was between 50 and 60. That still does not come anywhere near the claim of the young man who has written the letter that thousands were killed as a result of firing by "Muslim troops" and bombing of the village.

I am sorry that the writer of the letter has thought fit to call me a liar. I am sorry for the young man. But it shows the emotional state of mind most of us are in. It lifts the curtain from what is happening in the hearts and minds of most people. This picture of the Indian mind depresses me.

We may with a certain measure of justification blame the British or the Muslim League for what is happening. But in the final analysis it is a confession of our own failure. We claimed that we could control our people. But we have failed to control them.

During my tour of Europe in 1938-39 I had found many a similarity between the methods of the Muslim League and Nazism. When the Sudetenland was grabbed by Germany[6] the Muslim League held it up as an example of a separatist movement. When Croatia was carved as a separate State out of Yugoslavia,[7] the Muslim League found another very pleasant development. Like fascism the League has no constructive programme. A member of the Muslim League Working Committee once told me that when he asked Mr. Jinnah to chalk out a constructive programme, Mr. Jinnah said to the Muslim Leaguer, "You don't understand it. If I put any programme there will be disputes among us. The best programme is the propagation of hatred."

This is Muslim fascism. But as a reaction to it, there is the danger of a Hindu fascism growing up. It is our duty to prevent this fascist mentality from spreading. You cannot crush one kind of fascism by another kind of fascism.

6. In September 1938 Great Britain and France agreed to Hitler's demand for Germany's annexation of Sudetenland, an area of Czechoslovakia largely inhabited by German-speaking people.
7. In September 1937 an "opposition front" of Croats and dissident Serb parties was formed with the aim of overthrowing the 1931 Constitution of Yugoslavia and in 1939 Croatia was granted autonomous rights.

4. Assurance to the States People[1]

The age of complaints against the States rulers is over. The independence of India is closely knit with the emancipation of the Indian States and the stage has been set for great constitutional changes. It is for the States

1. Address to the delegates from the Indian States after the conclusion of the Congress session at Meerut on 24 November 1946. From *National Herald*, 25 November 1946.

people to bear the brunt of any movement started by them, but they will not find the Congress lacking in rendering legitimate support.

Can States subjects explain to me the type of assistance they want from the Congress?

A State delegate spoke about the Negotiating Committee in the open session of the Congress. The Negotiating Committee is nothing more than an agency through which Indian princes will contact the Constituent Assembly to discuss matters relating to the States. But objectionable things are happening in certain States, possibly engineered by the Political Department. Somebody wanted postponement of the Constituent Assembly and others declared their refusal to participate in it. But in spite of these dilatory tactics, the Congress proposes to make the best use of the Assembly in the formation of an Indian Republic.

BASTAR

1. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
11 November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

In September last I wrote to you suggesting that the Cabinet should be kept informed of developments in the Indian States and more particularly of the policy followed by the Political Department in regard to the Indian States. In your reply dated 28th September you were good enough to say that if information was required you would be glad to help us in obtaining it.

2. I am now writing to you about Bastar State where the Ruler is at present a minor.[2] Information has reached us that some kind of an agreement is being executed between the Resident of the Eastern States on behalf of the minor Maharaja and the Government of the Nizam whereunder the Nizam undertakes to explore and develop Bastar State at his expense and to retain financial control over the State till his investment is recouped from Bastar

1. Rajendra Prasad Papers, National Archives of India.
2. Pravir Chandra Bhanjdeo (1929-1966) acceded as Maharaja in 1947 after a long period under the Court of Wards. His State was again put under the Court of Wards in 1953 on charges of mismanagement. He was finally deposed in 1961 in favour of his younger brother. Pravir Chandra entered politics and was for sometime the President of the district Congress. He also served as a member of the Vidhan Sabha. The State Government accused him of fomenting trouble and inciting the *adibasis* to support his efforts to recover the throne.

State income. I shall be grateful if you will kindly let me know whether any such agreement or any other agreement is being entered into about Bastar State. It is obvious that such an arrangement would have far-reaching consequences and would be very greatly resented all over India. The fact that the Ruler is a minor and the Resident might undertake to act on his behalf adds to the gravity of the situation.

3. Bastar State is rich in minerals and there are considerable possibilities there of developing power. It is eminently suited for great schemes of development which would affect planning in India as a whole. Any arrangement affecting Bastar State not only affects the people of Bastar but is of great consequence to India. It would be peculiarly objectionable if anything was agreed to secretly and without the opportunity being given to the public to know about it.

4. On the eve of big constitutional changes in India, which must affect the States, it appears very undesirable that anything should be done to change the *status quo,* more especially without reference to the people concerned. Such changes will not only be resented by the people but might come in the way of any future constitutional arrangement. There have been many references to schemes of merger. No such scheme should be proceeded with without taking the consent of the people affected by it and without the fullest publicity. It is obvious that any internal rearrangement of India has certain consequences in regard to the whole of India. I trust, therefore, that no such change will be attempted on the eve of the Constituent Assembly.

5. Meanwhile I shall be grateful to you to have full information about Bastar State.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. To Lord Wavell[1]

Meerut (Camp)
21st November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Thank you for your letter of the 21st November regarding the Bastar State.[2]

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Wavell had written that the Hyderabad Government had negotiated a business-like arrangement for mining concessions with the Bastar State with the object of utilising the iron ore in Bailadila area of the Bastar State in their Godavari industrial development scheme. He denied that the Nizam was being given anything of control over the State.

I hope to consult the Member in charge of Industries & Supplies on my return to Delhi in regard to this matter. But I would suggest to you that any grant of mining concessions in Bastar State is not a matter which should be settled secretly and without full public examination, more specially as the Ruler of Bastar State is, I believe, a minor. It is quite possible, and indeed probable, that far better terms can be obtained by Bastar State if they dealt with industrial firms. The Hyderabad Government is not known for any particular experience in the development of industry and is generally considered one of the most backward in India. It seems rather odd to entrust a feudal and backward Government with the development of another State. The grant of mining concessions is always a matter requiring the closest scrutiny. If any foreign firm wanted such a concession in any part of India it would be strongly objected to. There can be no doubt that if Hyderabad State got these concessions in Bastar State and also, as it appears, developed railway communications, this would powerfully affect the whole economy of Bastar State and would put it under the economic domination of Hyderabad. It may be far more advantageous for Bastar State to have railway communications developed by the Central Provinces. Many other questions will no doubt arise but I think this is a matter which cannot be settled privately and secretly. It must be given the widest publicity and offers invited for mining concessions and then only a decision should be made.

The Nizam's Government is particularly backward in political and economic matters and any connection with a backward State is not likely to lead to progress in another State.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

DATIA

1. To Conrad Corfield[1]

New Delhi
15th November 1946

Dear Sir Conrad,[2]

This morning's newspaper contains a report about certain developments in

1. Crown Representative Records (microfilm), National Archives of India.
2. Conrad Laurence Corfield; joined I.C.S. in 1920; Assistant Commissioner, Punjab; joined Political Department in 1925; served in Kathiawar, Baluchistan, Rajputana, Central India and Hyderabad; Resident at Jaipur, 1938-40; Resident for the Punjab States, 1941-45; Political Adviser to the Viceroy as Crown Representative, 1945-47.

Datia State.[3] I have also received certain telegraphic messages from that State informing me that the State is observing a general hartal and that schools and markets are closed.[4] It appears from these reports that while the Maharaja,[5] in conformity with public opinion, has removed Mr. Ainuddin, the Dewan, from his post, the Resident for the Central Indian States has intervened and is attempting to reinstate the Dewan. I shall be glad if you let me know what the facts are and what attitude the Political Department is taking up in this matter. Does it normally impose Ministers and Dewans on the States against the wishes of both the Ruler and the public? Is it, in fact, in this particular instance doing so? I do not wish to go into the personal aspect of the matter, but it is well known that for years past there has been great public agitation against the Dewan, Mr. Ainuddin. It is obvious from the general hartal in the State what the public attitude towards him is. But apart from this I am interested in the question of principle that is raised by the intervention of the Political Department in Datia. I shall be glad if you will let me have an early reply. The situation in Datia is serious and a large number of State employees have resigned, and unless something is done rapidly there may be further deterioration.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Serious differences had arisen between the Maharaja of Datia and Col. Campbell, Resident, Central Indian States, who arrived at Datia on 11 November 1946, over the removal of the Dewan, Ainuddin, who was accused of inciting communal passions in the State. The demand for responsible government was opposed by the Dewan and, with a view to counteracting the demand for responsible government, the Dewan had assisted in the formation of the State Muslim League and the Scheduled Castes Federation. When the Maharaja, acting on popular demand, decided to terminate the services of the Dewan, the Political Department overruled the Maharaja for not having obtained the consent of the Resident prior to taking the decision. The intervention of Col. Campbell, who decided to retain the services of the Dewan, led to a complete hartal in Datia. The State employees again struck work on 12 November 1946 and all Government and municipal offices, courts and schools had to be closed.
4. The Datia People's Committee sent telegrams to Nehru and Pattabhi Sitaramayya urging immediate intervention in the matter.
5. Govind Singh Bahadur (1886-1951); succeeded in 1907; a relatively enlightened ruler.

2. To Conrad Corfield[1]

New Delhi
16th November, 1946

Dear Sir Conrad,
I wrote to you yesterday about Datia State. I have since received further information from a very reliable source about the conditions there. An able observer, who has been to Datia, has given me the enclosed note.[2]

This note states that Mr. Ainuddin was appointed Dewan of Datia by the Political Department in 1943 in spite of the protests of the Maharaja, and with the condition that the Maharaja could not dismiss him without the sanction of the Political Department. I should like to know if this is the normal practice of the Political Department.

Further the note states that the Dewan resigned and the settlement was arrived at which was endorsed by the political agent who was present then in Datia. The Resident arrived in Datia later and behaved in an extraordinary manner. He upset the settlement and insisted that the Dewan should remain. Further he has threatened the Maharaja to deprive him of his powers. Even the Maharani has not been spared.

These charges are serious and deserve immediate enquiry. I have been told repeatedly by the Political Department that the States are autonomous and that the department does not interfere even though the Rulers might misbehave towards their subjects. But if the Ruler and his people happen to function together, then apparently the Political Department interferes.

If the charges made out in the note are true, there should be an enquiry into the conduct of Sir Walter Campbell,[3] the Resident at Indore. In view of the critical situation in Datia, some immediate steps should be taken to remove the Dewan who has already resigned.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Crown Representative Records (microfilm), National Archives of India.
2. Not printed.
3. Walter Fendall Campbell (1894-1973); joined Indian Political Department, 1921; Prime Minister, Alwar, 1935-36; Resident for Central India, 1942-46; Resident in Mysore, 1946-47.

3. To Conrad Corfield[1]

New Delhi
17 November 1946

Dear Sir Conrad,
Thank you for your letter of the 16th November about recent events in Datia State. I shall be glad to know whether Mr. Ainuddin is continuing as Dewan of Datia or not. I should also like to know if the Resident threatened to deprive the Maharaja of his powers if he did not fall in with his wishes in regard to Mr. Ainuddin.

2. You informed me that Mr. Ainuddin has earned the confidence of the Crown Representative.[2] I take it that the Crown Representative does not know him at all and that this means that the Resident approves of Mr. Ainuddin. Is it not considered necessary that the Ruler of the State and the people of the State should also approve of the Dewan? Also is it considered desirable to upset the whole life of the State and irritate large numbers of people simply because the Resident approves of Mr. Ainuddin, even though nobody else does so? I might add that the good opinion of Mr. Ainuddin, said to be held by the Crown Representative, is not shared by many others who have some knowledge of him.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Crown Representative Records (microfilm), National Archives of India.
2. Corfield had said this in his letter to Nehru on 16 November 1946.

4. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
20th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
Before you went to the North-West Frontier Province, I wrote to you about Bastar State. In your absence I wrote to your Political Adviser about the recent happenings in Datia State which have been very extraordinary.

1. Crown Representative Records (microfilm), National Archives of India; also available in J.N. Collection.

Reports are coming to us from many States of intense repression of the people and sometimes of the interference of the Political Department with a view to the suppression of the people and of the people's organisations in the States.

2. You will realize that all these reports have caused us grave concern and we feel the Political Department is functioning in a very harmful manner. The whole position of this department vis-a-vis the Government of India is anomalous and completely out of keeping with present conditions. This position cannot continue for long. Meanwhile something has to be done very soon to bring to light all its activities so that both the Government of India and the public may know what is happening. I am particularly interested in the two matters I have referred, namely Bastar State and Datia. In the latter case the Resident appears to have behaved in a very undesirable way and some kind of enquiry into his conduct seems to be called for.

3. I am also very much concerned, as you know, in happenings in Kashmir State. Recently there have been fresh developments there and people engaged in election work for the coming elections to the State Assembly have been arrested *en bloc*. That is a very curious way of having an election.

4. The Political Department keeps studiously aloof from or perhaps encourages repression of the people in the States. Wherever the Ruler tends to be liberal it comes down upon him. This is in direct conflict with the policy of the Government of India and it is hardly possible for two conflicting policies to be pursued at the same time in India. Such conflicts can only lead to trouble.

5. I should be grateful to you if you could kindly let us have information about the activities of the Political Department, more especially in regard to the cases noted above, and about all proposals for merger and federation among the States. No such proposal should be entertained unless the people of the States have been consulted.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

LONDON AIRPORT, 3 DECEMBER 1946

AT A RECEPTION IN LONDON, DECEMBER 1946

5. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
29th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
May I write to you again about affairs in Datia State. You had suggested some days ago that the Political Adviser might discuss this matter with me. But I have not seen him yet and perhaps he has gone out of Delhi.

I feel that things have come to such a pass in Datia that very urgent action is necessary. Repeated references are made to me about it by my colleagues in the States and elsewhere[2] and I can hardly remain silent on the subject. What you told me during our recent interview[3] was based, no doubt, on the report you had received from the Political Department which means from the Resident of the area concerned. As things have developed, it seems clear that the Resident is an important party to the dispute and his account must necessarily be a one-sided account. My own information, which is based on some knowledge also during the last few years, does not fit in with that account. In any event, I am not particularly interested in the Maharaja but I am greatly interested in the people of the State. There has been an extraordinary upheaval there against what has been done by the Resident. It is clear that the Resident's action is in entire opposition to the wishes of the people. There is no communal problem essentially involved. Intervention by the Political Department in this way puts that department in direct opposition to the people everywhere and the department suffers in public esteem. As it is, there is a great deal of feeling against the Political Department, both in the States and the rest of India.

I have not troubled you with numerous other complaints which I continue to receive about the Political Department's activities in various States. There is at present a very widespread feeling against it and something should be done to meet this feeling.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Crown Representative Records (microfilm), National Archives of India; also available in J.N. Collection.
2. Seth Govind Das and Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who toured Datia State, reported that the situation in Datia had been grossly mishandled by the representatives of the Political Department.
3. See *ante*, section 3(III), item 9.

HYDERABAD

1. To Swami Ramanand Tirtha[1]

New Delhi
24 September 1946

Dear Swamiji,
I have discussed the Hyderabad situation with you and our colleagues from Hyderabad. We have considered it by itself and in the all-India context. At any time, and more specially today, the all-India context is important and cannot be ignored, particularly when the situation is a changing one, and the next two or three months might well result in considerable changes in the all-India situation.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I am putting down below what I think should be done in the immediate future. It is difficult to provide for every development in a changing situation. Inevitably decisions have to be taken on the spot. All one can do is to suggest some guiding considerations.

1. It is perfectly clear that the reform scheme which has been promulgated in Hyderabad is basically bad.[2] It is not merely a question of degree but of wrong foundations. It must, therefore, be rejected completely as it is. Any minor changes in it will make no real difference. Of course, if major changes are made, we shall have to consider them as some interim arrangements.

2. Our demand should, therefore, be for a postponement of the scheme to allow for radical changes to be made in it. Our real demand is for the scrapping of the scheme, but I am deliberately toning down that demand for the present so that we might make it possible for the Administration to take a step which is not too difficult for them to take.

3. The question of taking part in the executive of the State cannot be separated from the acceptance or non-acceptance of the reform scheme. Thus, if the reform scheme is rejected completely, it is not possible to co-operate in the executive, whatever the conditions may be. But if the scheme is postponed, then the other question may be considered provided, of course, it is worthwhile considering on its own merits. It is generally desirable in the

1. A.I.S.P.C. File No. 66/1945-46, pp. 3-5, N.M.M.L.
2. On 6 July 1946, the Nawab of Chhatari, President of the Nizam's Executive Council, announced the decision of the Government to inaugurate a new Legislative Assembly in October 1946. There would be two non-official members in the Executive Council. As a preliminary to elections, the ban on the State Congress was lifted.

present context to accept executive responsibility provided the context is a proper one. That context, to some extent, will come into being if the reform scheme is put aside and if a sufficient measure of executive responsibility is offered. Even so this can only be considered as a temporary measure to give place to an entirely new scheme.

4. Our objective must continue to be full responsible government, but we should not start civil disobedience for this objective. If any satisfactory interim arrangement is provided for, we might accept it but only if it appears to lead to basic changes which point towards responsibility.

5. The non-acceptance of the reform scheme leads to its boycott. This boycott should be conducted peacefully in action and language and everything should be avoided which might produce conflict on a large scale. There should on no account be any picketing or hartals. Normal activity should be continued, i.e., meetings etc., and specially individual or group approaches.

6. It should be realised that the new Prime Minister, Sir Mirza Ismail, is a more liberal type of person than usual Ministers in States. He may not be able to do much, but it is desirable not to make of him an out-and-out opponent. He may be able to help in the future.

7. The Nizam[3] also, from all reports, is at present more favourably inclined than previously. No undesirable references to him should be made nor should he be irritated. All our propaganda should avoid the personal element.

8. In view of the communal situation in India care should be taken not to raise communal issues nor to do anything which might result in a communal clash.

9. Generally speaking normal activities of the State Congress should be pursued peacefully and every effort made to consolidate the State Congress.

10. The situation being a rapidly changing one in India as a whole, we should carefully watch it and adapt ourselves to it. Our main objective should be to consolidate the State Congress and not to precipitate a crisis. In this way strength will be gained, and when any trial of strength comes the State Congress will be able to function effectively.

These are some general suggestions which I hope you and your colleagues

3. Mir Osman Ali (1886-1967); succeeded as Nizam in 1911; Rajpramukh of Hyderabad from January 1950 till its dissolution as a State in November 1956.

will keep in mind. If Sir Mirza Ismail wants to meet any of you, no objection should be raised. Normally any formal conversation should be carried on with responsible office-bearers of the organization. But if other prominent members are invited socially or otherwise to meet Sir Mirza Ismail, there is no objection to their meeting him, but it should be made clear that any responsible approach should be made to the office-bearers who represent the organisation.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

KASHMIR

1. Telegram to Jialal Kilam[1]

Your telegram.[2] Certainly prefer appeal immediately and find out where Sheikh Saheb is kept now[3] and inform me. Convey my greeting to Begum Abdullah[4] and tell her not to worry.

1. Printed in *National Herald*, 14 September 1946.
2. Kilam, the lawyer defending Sheikh Abdullah, informed Nehru that Abdullah had been sentenced to three years imprisonment on charges of sedition and sought Nehru's advice.
3. On 11 September 1946, Sheikh Abdullah went on hunger-strike in protest against insufficient rations in the Bahu Fort at Jammu and was subsequently moved to Reasi jail.
4. Akbar Jahan, President, All-India Women's Conference, Kashmir branch; Member of Lok Sabha, 1977-80.

2. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
September 16th 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

There is one matter which I should like to bring to your attention as it is going to have widespread repercussions all over India, and more especially

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. I, p. 22.

among the States people. This is the recent sentence of three years' imprisonment given to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in Kashmir. You know a good deal of the background of this case and of the events in Kashmir. You know also that I have been personally involved in this matter and the Congress Working Committee assumed responsibility in regard to it.[2] The Committee was reluctant to take any steps which might lead to further complications, but at the same time it felt strongly about it and I believe a communication was sent on their behalf to the Maharaja of Kashmir.[3] Now that this trial has resulted in what is, I believe, the maximum sentence and conditions in Kashmir continue to be as bad as ever, the Congress Working Committee at their next meeting, which will be held soon, will no doubt give attention to Kashmir and take such steps as they may consider suitable.

There are several cases still pending in Kashmir. One of these is against my secretary, Pandit Dwarkanath Kachru, who was arrested simply because he was with me when I went there on the first occasion. For months now he has been in imprisonment and his trial does not begin.[4] Indeed, I do not know what the case is about because all he did was to be with me.

I understand that next month elections to the Kashmir State Assembly will take place. A large number of members of the Assembly and prospective candidates are in prison, or in detention, and I am told that every obstruction is being placed in the way of the Kashmir National Conference[5] in order to prevent them from taking any effective part in these elections.

All these matters, as well as other happenings, are producing a sense of anger in Kashmir itself and outside. We are trying to avoid as far as possible any step which might lead to unpleasant happenings in the hope that matters would adjust themselves and the State authorities might change their policy in a manner which will not affect their prestige. They have evidently not done so and things will take their course now. I cannot remain a silent spectator of these events when my own colleagues are concerned and when I believe the State authorities have functioned in a most objectionable manner. Nor can the Congress remain silent and impassive.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. The Working Committee in June 1946, requesting Nehru to return to Delhi for negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, assured him that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir its own.
3. On 20 June 1946, Maulana Azad had requested the Maharaja to postpone Sheikh Abdullah's trial to facilitate Nehru's early return to Delhi. See also *Selected Works* Vol. 15, p. 388.
4. Dwarkanath Kachru, General Secretary of the Indian States People's Conference, was arrested at Kohala on 19 June 1946 and then taken to Domel where Nehru and his party were.
5. A punitive tax was imposed, mostly on sellers of newspapers, mainly to weaken the candidates put up by the National Conference in the coming elections.

3. The Trial of Sheikh Abdullah[1]

Kashmir has been very much in the news for some months past. Ordinarily looked upon as a tourist resort, a country famous throughout history for its loveliness and climate, it has attracted an increasing number of people from year to year.

But it was not its beauty or its attraction for the tourist that brought it in the news in the spring and summer of 1946. Another aspect of this mountain country, which nature has placed like a crown on the brow of India, was constantly thrust before the eyes of millions in the rest of India and even abroad. This was not a thing of beauty. It was ugly in the extreme for this aspect was compounded of extreme poverty and misery, of authoritarian and despotic rule in the interest of a few while crushing the many, and of a fierce suppression of the unhappy people of the State.

Anything that happens in Kashmir has a certain importance for the rest of India, but recent events there have had an even greater importance, for the people's struggle and its fierce repression became symbols of a larger struggle for emancipation. Thus Kashmir became symbolic of the States in India where there is ferment and seething discontent, both political and economic, against the autocratic and often feudal rule that prevails there. The people of other States looked with sympathy towards the people of Kashmir and there was a feeling of solidarity between them. The Rulers of many States, no doubt, sympathised with and encouraged the Kashmir authorities and felt that their own interests were tied up to some extent with the fate of this struggle in Kashmir.

Popular movements which have any reality and strength behind them usually throw up personalities who typify and symbolise that movement. Thus Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah became the living and outstanding symbol of the urge of the Kashmir people for their freedom. Thus also the trial of Sheikh Abdullah became something much more than the trial of an individual; it was the trial of a whole people. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that, in the ultimate analysis, it was the trial before the bar of public opinion of the State authorities who had tried to stem the flowing river of the great popular movement.

It is extraordinary how those in authority become blind to the lessons of history; how they cannot even understand current happenings. Just when we find that India is on the verge of independence, we find the Kashmir authorities, totally oblivious of this fact, seeking to crush their own people and their desire for freedom. A real people's movement can never be crushed in this

1. New Delhi, 24 September 1946. Introduction to *Kashmir on Trial* (Lahore, 1947).

way, much less can it be crushed when India herself is putting an end to foreign rule.

Because of all these factors, recen events in Kashmir have assumed an all-India importance and the trial of Sheikh Abdullah has a particular significance. I am glad that a record of this trial is being published, for this will bring many new facts before the public and help them to understand what has been happening in Kashmir and what happens or may happen in many another State in India.

The story of this brave struggle against the armed forces of the State has not ended by this trial. That story will go on till it reaches the logical end which can only be the establishment of freedom in Kashmir within the larger framework of a free and independent India. Meanwhile Sheikh Abdullah and many of his colleagues lie in prison and to them we send our comradely greetings.

4. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
23 January 1947

Dear Lord Wavel',

You are, no doubt, following the situation in a number of Indian States. There is a progressive deterioration, and in many States some kind of conflict is going on between the authorities and the people. During the last few months I have tried my utmost to avoid such a conflict and to restrain the people's organisations. Their complaint has been, however, that aggressive action is taken by the authorities just at a time when there is talk of fundamental changes and, when the people of the States were looking forward to the introduction of a democratic form of government, they have to face instead repressive action by the authorities. I am afraid this will lead, as it has already led to some extent, to grave consequences.

2. I do not know what attitude the Political Department takes in such matters. But it is the common report, and even some Ru!ers of States have confirmed it, that the Political Department disapproves of any substantia' reforms. I have had some very surprising reports about this attitude of the Political Department.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 9, pp. 540-541.

3. In view of the increasingly difficult economic situation all over India, this trouble in the States may well lead to bigger upheavals. I am afraid that the static character of the State administration, at a time when everyone is looking forward to change, is chiefly responsible for this increasing conflict. The vague promises made of rapid reforms and in some cases of responsible government have not been kept.

4. I should like to draw your special attention to the state of affairs in Kashmir where for the last eight months a bitter struggle involving severe repression of the people has gone on. Eight months of effort and the utilisation of the full machinery of the State has not succeeded in repressing the popular movement there. This failure itself is evidence of the futility of the methods employed. But though these efforts have failed, Kashmir is being pushed forward to the verge of ruin and people there are suffering from great hardships. Their leaders continue in prison and the people have been harassed in some ways which can only be termed inhuman. It is terribly cold there now and people lack food and fuel, the two essential needs. There are charges of gross partiality and corruption in the State administration. There is mass unemployment and the only people who seem to flourish are some State employees and the black-marketeers. With properly organised control of foodstuffs, fuel and other essentials, some relief might have been given. I fear that the policy of the Kashmir State is leading to a catastrophe.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

MISCELLANEOUS

1. To the Raja of Phaltan[1]

New Delhi
8th September 1946

My dear Raja Saheb,[2]
I am sorry for the delay in answering your letter of the 24th August. You will, however, appreciate that all of us here have been very much preoccupied during the past few weeks.

1. A.I.S.P.C. File No. 45/1946, pp. 21-25, N.M.M.L.
2. Malojirao Naik-Nimbalkar (1896-1978); ruler of Phaltan in Satara district; M.P.C.C. President and Minister in Bombay, 1950-56.

The answer to the question of forming a Union of the Deccan States[3] must inevitably depend on the popular reaction to the proposal. Such a Union would have no strength or coherence or unity unless it represented the popular will. Normally speaking, a Union of small States is desirable. This adds to their resources and improves the quality of their administration. But at the same time it has to be seen whether such a Union is going to be an organic one, or just an administrative putting together of various States. We have first of all to examine the whole background, geographical, linguistic, etc., and then finally comes the most important aspect of the question, that is, the desire of the people concerned. Any step taken, even a right step, without the consultation and concurrence of the people is likely to lead to their opposition and this might defeat any scheme.

I understand that there is a considerable amount of opposition on behalf of Praja Mandals and people's organisations in some of the Deccan States to the proposal for Union. I have not gone into this matter carefully, but some of the arguments advanced seem to have force. For instance, the Deccan States are rather spread out, are not contiguous, and areas are separated from one another with islands here and there. This obviously would come in the way of administrative as well as economic development.

Nevertheless, in spite of this, there may be a balance of advantage in favour of a Union. Ultimately, I have little doubt that the autonomous units to the Indian federation will have to be compact and big enough to support an advanced and progressive policy for the unit. Any arrangement made now which does not satisfy the various criteria for a unit of the federation is likely to be a temporary arrangement which will have to be revised later on. This is no bar to the arrangement being made now, though it is an important consideration.

The whole point turns on this. How are you to get the people's representatives to consider any such scheme and give their decision? Mahatma Gandhi, I believe, advised that the first step to be taken was for responsible government to be given by each State. That, I think, is the proper approach. The objection raised to that is that it may delay matters at this stage. I do not personally see that there should be any considerable delay. The decision to give responsible government can be taken without any delay whatever. The actual changeover to it may take some little time.

It is proposed in your letter of the 17th August addressed to your brother rulers that a kind of constituent assembly might be called to consider the proposal for the Union. This is certainly worth considering, provided the

3. The initiative in the formation of a Union was first taken by some Deccan States in May 1946 and the Union came into existence by early 1947. The Deccan States group consisted of 17 States—Kolhapur, Akalkot, Aundh, Bhor, Jamkhandi, Janjira, Jath, Kurundwad Sr. Kurundwad Jr. Miraj Sr. Miraj Jr. Mudhol, Phaltan, Ramdurg, Sangli, Savnoor and Savantwadi—and one estate—Wadi Estate.

constituent assembly is made really representative of the people concerned. You say that in almost all the Deccan States there are Legislative Assemblies which might send their representatives chosen by the elected element in them. I do not know what the franchise of these Legislative Assemblies is. If it is a narrow franchise, then it will not be truly representative of the people. Possibly in such cases an addition can be made. That is, the constituent assembly might consist of representatives of elected members of the Legislative Assemblies plus other representatives of the public, where necessary, such as Praja Mandals, etc., plus some representatives of the present administrations. Such a constituent assembly could consider not only the problem of the Union, but also the problem of the whole constitution for the States and the Union, that is, provided they agree to the Union. Before such a constituent assembly is convened or meets some kind of a basis should be laid down and the approach indicated. The only possible approach is an acceptance of responsible democratic government. That is to say, if the States declare in favour of responsible government and convene the constituent assembly on a wide basis with the object of giving effect to their declaration in such form as the assembly might think fit and proper this would remove the objections of various people and create a favourable atmosphere for discussion. Any limitations placed in the way of the constituent assembly will be highly undesirable and will simply irritate the people concerned.

Naturally whatever decision is arrived at it would have to fit in with the larger scheme of things in India, that is, the final decisions of the all-India Constituent Assembly.

These are some suggestions for your consideration and the consideration of your brother rulers. I am sending copies of this letter to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankarrao Deo.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5

NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

1. To Abdul Ghaffar Khan[1]

New Delhi
14th September 1946

My dear Badshah Khan,
I am enclosing a copy of a letter which I am sending to Dr. Khan Sahib. I am sending this copy so as to avoid having to write about the same matters again.

I need not tell you that we have all been greatly troubled by the Waziristan operations. We have discussed these matters with you in the past and I am in full agreement with your own views about them. We shall endeavour to give effect to a new policy in consonance with those views and we want all your help and cooperation in this matter. I hope and trust that these operations have ended now and that some kind of a settlement has been reached. But the wider problem has to be considered soon.

I do hope that you will come here for the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. meetings which are very important from every point of view. This will enable us to discuss with you further tribal problems and to take your advice in the matter.

Yunus went away to Bombay yesterday but he hopes to be back on the occasion of the A.I.C.C. meeting.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. File No. 201-PS/46-PMS.

2. To Khan Sahib[1]

New Delhi
14 September 1946

My dear Khan,
I am sending this letter through Weightman,[2] the Secretary of the External Affairs Department. He is going on leave and is passing through Peshawar

1. File No. 201-PS/46-PMS.
2. Hugh Weightman (1898-1949); entered Indian Civil Service, 1922; transferred to Indian Political Service, 1929; served in Assam, Central India, Baluchistan and Bahrain (Persian Gulf); Deputy Secretary and later Joint Secretary, External Affairs Department, 1940-44; Revenue Commissioner, Baluchistan, 1944-45; Secretary to Government of India, External Affairs Department, 1946-47.

on his way to Kabul. He intends meeting you and the Governor and discussing some of the Frontier problems, more specially the problems of the tribal areas.

As you can well realise all of us have been very much exercised since we heard about the bombing of the Shabi Khels in Waziristan. This began on the 1st of August but none of us knew anything about it till a few days ago. As soon as I heard about it I made enquiries and some of the facts were placed before me. The matter was complicated because the War Department was also involved and I was told that there was a possibility of the whole incident ending fairly soon. I took urgent steps to have the matter placed before the Cabinet. Just then I learnt that a settlement had almost been reached and that all bombing operations had stopped. I was greatly pleased to learn of this.

But of course the whole question of Frontier policy remains and we are going to consider it soon formally at a Cabinet meeting. I need not tell you what my views are about this matter. We have discussed them with you and Badshah Khan previously and I entirely agree that this bombing business must be ended. We have to adopt a completely new approach, a friendly and cooperative approach. At the same time we cannot tolerate murder, kidnapping and ransom and have to deal with it as firmly as possible. Whatever the method of dealing with these may be, it should not be by bombing, for bombing a civilian population is hateful and is opposed entirely to our past policy.

This matter will have to be considered fully in consultation with you, Badshah Khan and other friends in the Frontier. If possible I might myself come over to the Frontier for two or three days to confer with you and possibly to visit the tribal areas. But at the moment I am very busy and I want to be clear in my own mind about our general policy before I go to the Frontier, so that in any event I shall wait till we have considered this matter at a formal Cabinet meeting. I hope Badshah Khan and you will also give full thought to this matter. Of course you have given plenty of thought but I want concrete proposals. In any event what is desirable is for a friendly mission to visit the tribal areas to confer with the chief men there.

The Constituent Assembly, as you know, is going to appoint an Advisory Committee which, *inter alia*, will consider tribal problems. In this connection I have seen a letter and a note written by the Governor of the Frontier Province which you must have seen. I have myself added a note to this largely agreeing with some of the suggestions made in that letter and note. As a matter of fact it becomes totally absurd to bomb people when we have to approach them the next day for cooperation in the Advisory Committee. In this latter connection also a visit to the tribal areas will be necessary, but I hope that we shall be able to get some properly elected representatives of the tribes to join us in the Advisory Committee here. That matter, however, can

wait for a while and probably the Constituent Assembly is not likely to meet for a couple of months or so.

There are many other matters which I should like to discuss with Badshah Khan and you. It would be a good thing if you and Badshah Khan could come here next week when the A.I.C.C. meets. I hope in any event that Badshah Khan will come for the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. meetings. We have very important matters to consider and decisions to take about our whole policy which would affect not only the Interim Government but Congress organization and indirectly the Frontier Province. I should like all the A.I.C.C. representatives from the Frontier to come to this meeting.

We have tremendous problems to face and we want the advice and co-operation of all our friends. For my part I have full confidence that we shall not only face them but solve them. But this means hard work and the fullest cooperation amongst all of us. You in the Frontier have your own peculiar and difficult problems. If our Government here can be of any help to you please let me know and we shall do our best. For the rest the burden has to be borne by you and your colleagues, and I earnestly trust that all of you will pull together and thus face and overcome all difficulties.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

3. To Ahmad Nawaz Khan[1]

New Delhi
17th September 1946

Dear Nawab Sahib,[2]
I thank you for your telegram.[3] I agree with you that the Frontier people love freedom. Certainly, we do not want to limit their freedom in any way in regard to grouping or otherwise. Our own view is that grouping should be optional.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 53-PS/46-PMS.
2. Nawab of Dera Ismail Khan.
3. Nawaz Khan requested Nehru to "make grouping question optional and protect us from slavery, subjugation and subordination of Punjab Province."

4. To Mehr Chand Khanna[1]

New Delhi
1st October 1946

My dear Mehr Chand,
Your letter of the 27th September about the kidnapping of five Hindus from Shakerdara was handed to me this morning.[2] I am enquiring into this matter and we shall of course do what we can. I suggest to you, however, to find out all the facts from the Governor or the Chief Secretary of your province who will know more about this than we do here. We are also communicating with them.

I intend to visit the Frontier and the tribal areas about the middle of this month. Probably I shall reach Peshawar on the 15th and spend about a week round about the Frontier. I hope Badshah Khan will accompany me. I should like Dr. Khan Sahib also to come, if he is free.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Department of External Affairs, File No. 8(49)-NWA/46, p. 13/corr., National Archives of India.
2. Khanna wrote that five Hindus, who had been kidnapped by tribals from Shakerdara in Kohat district two months earlier, had still not been released.

5. To Khan Sahib[1]

New Delhi
1st October 1946

My dear Khan,
As you perhaps know, I propose to visit the Frontier areas about the middle of this month. I intend reaching Peshawar on the 15th by plane and spending the day there. I should like to have talks about Frontier policy with you, Badshah Khan and the Governor. Next day we hope to go to the tribal areas and we shall spend a few days there in various parts. I am anxious to have Badshah Khan with me. If you could accompany us it would be excellent, but I do not know how much time you will be able to give. Anyhow, I want to have a long talk with you about these matters.

1. File No. 201-PS/46-PMS. Nehru wrote in similar terms to Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

Weightman has sent me a long letter about his conversation with you.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

6. To Malik Samar Khan[1]

Dear Malik Sahib,
I have received the telegram which you and Malik Atta Khan, Maulana Ghulam Mohammad, Malik Mir Akbar Khan and Malik Mouzullah Khan had sent me.[2] I am grateful for your message and I trust that you will convey my thanks to the other signatories of the telegram also.

I am deeply interested in the welfare of the tribal territory and I hope that I shall be of service to the people of this territory. We want to approach them as friends and to try to understand their difficulties and to remove them. It is not our desire to interfere with the freedom they possess but rather to help them in every way to better their condition.

We should like them to come into closer contact with their neighbours in the Frontier Province and in India as a whole, so that we may get to know each other better.

I hope to visit the tribal areas myself, if possible, next month and to meet you and other friends then. We can discuss together what we should do to improve the condition of these areas and the people who live there.

With all good wishes to you and to your friends,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 2 October 1946.
2. The telegram dated 21 September read: "We, residents of the tribal territory, pay our heartiest greetings on deserved success of getting reins of the Government. As brothers we expect better treatment than Britishers and are prepared to support the cause of freedom with heart and soul whenever desired for our motherland."

7. To Khan Sahib[1]

New Delhi
10th October 1946

My dear Khan,

As you know, Sir Olaf Caroe came here yesterday and we had a talk about my forthcoming Frontier tour. He was rather perturbed about it and did not like the timing of it just at present.[2] However, I hope I have explained the matter sufficiently to him and pointed out that any postponement of the tour would have unfortunate results.

He also felt, as was natural for him, that the tour should not be a political one or party one. To some extent I agreed with him. I do not want to go to the Frontier for party purposes or narrow political purposes but rather as a representative of the Interim Government to convey our friendly greetings to the tribal folk and to have informal talks with them. I do not propose to discuss with them any detailed matters of policy or to commit myself in any way at this stage. I want to hear what they say.

Although I am going as a representative of Government I cannot wholly divest myself of my other capacities. Indeed I do not wish to do so. I cannot divide myself into compartments.

About my programme there, it is not possible for me to draw it up and I have to leave it to Sir Olaf Caroe and my department here. It really does not matter very much how many places I visit on this occasion. I want to spend some little time in Peshawar to talk with you, Badshah Khan and others. I want to visit the Sardaryab Centre.[3] I do not think on this occasion I shall have the time or the opportunity to discuss internal provincial matters, though to some extent no doubt you and I will have a talk about them.

Badshah Khan and you will accompany me, I hope, during my tour, as also the Secretary of our department here and one or two others. We cannot add to this number easily because we shall be going by air to many places and there is lack of accommodation.

As for the people we meet, this will inevitably have to be largely arranged by the Political Agents. You can discuss this matter with Sir Olaf Caroe and make any suggestions that you like because I want to meet all kinds of people. I do not want any formal jirgas or meetings, but rather informal talks. In this matter you will of course consult Badshah Khan also.

1. File No. 201-PS/46-PMS.
2. Caroe had telegraphed to Wavell on 29 September that if Nehru's visit "is carried out at this moment and before League comes to terms I am convinced that serious tribal reactions must be expected and that any hope of securing coalition is likely to be wrecked."
3. The main centre of the Khudai Khidmadgars on the bank of the Sardaryab.

I shall stay with you in Peshawar both on the first day of my arrival and on the last day of my visit. In the tribal territory I am told that arrangements for stay will have to be in the messes. I do not mind this myself though I would have preferred a more intimate way of stay with the people there, but I think we had better not insist on this and leave arrangements in the hands of the officials in charge.

A provisional programme has been drawn up and you will get a copy of this from Sir Olaf Caroe. I have no suggestions to make about it. I think it is better for me to visit the Sardaryab Centre on my return to Peshawar when I can discuss with friends my impressions of the tour.

I should like you to discuss with Badshah Khan my provisional programme and then have full discussion about various matters with Sir Olaf Caroe. We propose to reach Peshawar by air on the morning of the 16th and to spend six or seven days in the tribal territory and the Frontier Province.

I have been told by Sir Olaf Caroe that some people may not like my visiting the tribal areas at this time. Perhaps this is so. I am sorry for this. So far as I am concerned I do not wish to raise political or communal issues during my visit. Public meetings should therefore be avoided, though I shall of course address the people at the Sardaryab Centre when I go there.

This visit of mine, being on a somewhat different level from my normal private visits, should be treated as such. I want to give most of my time to talks and discussions.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

8. To Abdul Ghaffar Khan[1]

New Delhi
10th October 1946

My dear Badshah Khan,

Thank you for your note of the 6th October. I have written to Dr. Khan Sahib and I enclose a copy of this letter for your information.[2] I realise the significance of what you say in your letter and appreciate it. It is possible that I may not be able to meet all the people I should like to meet, but it does not matter very much on this occasion. I want to have a general survey

1. File No. 201-PS/46-PMS.
2. See the preceding item.

avoiding as far as possible controversies and arguments. If you and Dr. Khan Sahib are with me, we shall be able to have full talks. I think it is best to leave the drawing up of the programme to the officials in charge. This is a novel experience for them as it is going to be for me and I want to smooth the way for all concerned.

I have suggested that I might go to the Sardaryab Centre on my way back on the last day of my visit. I hope you agree. Please have a talk with Dr. Khan and make any suggestions that you think proper. He will then talk with Sir Olaf Caroe and the programme will be finally fixed up.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

9. A Mission of Love[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru : Mine is a mission of love and I have no desire to rule over you.

A Pathan : We are a free people and we don't want to lose our sovereignty.

JN : I am amazed that you people, who get Government money[2] and act as they wish, talk of freedom. We have struggled for India's freedom and for the establishment of a people's government consisting of all communities. We want you also to be completely free of foreign rule.

A tribesman : We do not know about your mission and refuse to be ruled by any outsider as "kingdoms changed but the Wazirs' freedom was unhampered." We will talk to Mr. Jinnah if we want to discuss Indian politics.

JN : We shall always help you in your struggle for freedom. Get Mr. Jinnah if you like. We shall not stop anybody. But realise that you will have to achieve complete freedom and not a show of it.

1. Address to a jirga (an assembly) of about a hundred tribal leaders at Razmak on 17 October 1946. From *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times* of 19 October 1946.
2. It was British policy to pay large sums of money to the tribal Maliks.

10. The Army in a Free India[1]

I am delighted to meet the Indian troops here and am grateful for the reception you have given me. For a long time there has been a barrier between us. That wall is now crumbling away. The Indian army has won for itself a great name throughout the world. Now you should, in the cause of your own country, show that prowess you have hitherto shown in fighting for others. We have varied and important tasks facing us and we have many responsibilities. We have to rid India of the curse of poverty and improve the tone of our life. Today we hear talk of India's independence. But what does that mean? This independence is for all the forty crores of Indians, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. In an independent India, everyone will be equal.

A country's independence is protected by soldiers. In India all classes will have to protect her independence. We do not want to deprive anyone of his independence. On the other hand we want to enlarge everyone's freedom. In the grand structure that we wish to erect in India, there will be a place for everyone. *Jai Hind.*

1. Address to Indian soldiers and civilians at Razmak, 17 October 1946. From *The Hindu*, 20 October 1946.

11. A "Strange Frontier Policy"[1]

I am visiting the Frontier after six years[2] during which the world passed through a great struggle. I come this time in a new capacity, as a Member of the Government. The tribal question which so far has never been entrusted to any Indian Executive Councillor has been en rusted to me.

Most of the officers in my department spent their lives and had earlier tra ning in the N.W.F.P., tribal areas or Baluchistan. Their work here, I

1. Speech at Peshawar, 19 October 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 21 October 1946.
2. Nehru visited the Frontier in January 1938. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, section 6.

notice, has given them a particular mental outlook and make-up not to be found among officers in any other part of India. From my Frontier visit, I have found that Frontier officials have quite a different policy which is a 'strange Frontier policy". Officials in the Frontier give themselves airs all their own. It was the same with officers in the Punjab about 25 years ago. They have somewhat changed now. But even now they are different from the officers in the rest of India.

Soon after I took charge I learnt there had been a bombardment in Waziristan.[3] It is worth your noting that I first came to know of it through Badshah Khan's statement.[4] When I tried to understand this question,[5] intricate and baffling, problems stood up before me and assumed formidable proportions. I, therefore, decided to personally visit the tribal areas and grapple with these difficult problems. Difficulties are there to be overcome.

Do not commit the mistake of thinking that assumption of office does not mean real power. Power has come to us due to the revolutionary urge among the masses. The old order is ending and we are on the threshold of a new era. We may not have real power today, but it is soon coming to our hands.

3. According to a press statement issued on 6 September 1946 certain areas of Waziristan were bombed as a punitive action.
4. Badshah Khan stated on 6 September 1946 that he had just learnt of mass aerial bombardment in Waziristan.
5. On 22 June, some Pathans of the Bromi Khel tribe abducted the Political Agent and his party and demanded a ransom. As a result, in August and September some of their villages were bombed.

12. Science in War and in Peace[1]

The old approach to the tribal area has been unsuccessful. We have spent vast sums of money in the past but to no purpose. The basic factor is the economic life of this country. You cannot win over a people by punitive expeditions. You can only win them over by treating them exactly as if they

1. Address to army officers, Wana, 19 October 1946. From *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times* of 21 October 1946.

were your own people. Of course crime must be prevented. But in modern theory of crime, even in case of an individual criminal, jurists try to penetrate through the act of crime to the entire environment which is responsible for the crime. Just as there are individuals with undeveloped minds, similarly there may be a whole people who are immature. Such a people require education to develop their minds including the scope for modern vocation. To this end we must lend our efforts.

As for the role of the national army in free India I would like to say that the army of free India must have the best weapons possible and the scientists and industrialists of India must place such weapons in their hands to safeguard India's newly won freedom. If we must have a force we must have the best.

I can give examples in history where superior weapons had made all the difference between victory or defeat—destruction of Rome by Attilla, the gun that gave Babar an empire in India. Scientific research and weapons go hand in hand. Those who have made the greatest advance in science and have the industry to back such research have the best weapons. See the atomic bomb which threatened to make other weapons obsolete. Before the war, leading nations were engaged in a race to capture nuclear energy. The Germans lost the race by two or three months, otherwise the course of history would have been changed.

India today is inspired by a dynamic urge. On the one hand there is this urge and on the other is the economic crisis. There is a race between this urge and the economic crisis—one symptom of which was the Bengal famine. Who will win in this race?

Although yet faltering like a patient getting up from the sickbed or a prisoner released from jail, India is today among the four great powers of the world, other three being America, Russia and China. But in point of resources India has a greater potential than China.

It is difficult for anyone now to stop the rise of India.

Indians have shown that they can use weapons placed in their hands. If further opportunity arises, they will show it again. I am glad that the barrier between the army and the people is now gone. India's future army would be a nationalised army and not, as has been misnamed, an Indianised army.

The key to removal of poverty and to raising of the standard of life by the provisions of better houses, education and food is the development of heavy industries. A dozen nation-building schemes of huge dimensions are already in hand and, if there is no war for the next ten years, these should by then be complete, giving India a unique position in certain directions of economic effort especially irrigation. Progress will be hastened by hard work and scientific research.

Therefore I want that our own scientists should be the foremost in the world.

13. Appeal to Pathans for Cooperation[1]

As Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has already told you, times are changing fast. I come to you because in view of the changing times we are all looking forward into the future to shape our destiny.

Everyone wants freedom. For many years we have been fighting for freedom. You too have been bravely standing up against the enemy. Now we have come to you to discuss with you how we can—both of us—be free. It is not desired that either we suppress you or you suppress us. Neither of us wants imperialist rule over us.

We wish that everyone should have a Government of their own people and should be free. Freedom should be based on three fundamental principles. First, all should be free, not merely the Princes and higher classes but everyone of the poorest; secondly, there should be no suppression of one community by another but both should cooperate; and, thirdly, common prosperity should be built on goodwill of both.

You Pathans are a brave and hardy people. But you must give up fighting among yourselves. That only places you more and more into the hands of other people. We shall help you as much as possible if you want our help. If you don't want our help, you will not have it. It will be entirely your choice. Nothing is to be forced on you. United we shall go a long way on the road to freedom.

Neither we nor you want suppression. Everyone should have a Government of the people and all should be free. But how can there be freedom when the people are poor? We have to remove poverty, improve supplies, and provide education. We must be happy as well as free, and we can be one of the leading nations of the world. You know that in the past India was a prosperous country to which people from all parts of the world came. Then we lost that glory. The foundation of our regeneration should be based on cooperation of everyone.

1. Speech at Jandola (Waziristan), 19 October 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 21 October 1946.

14. Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

Peshawar
20 October 1946

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
New Delhi

Just returned from Khyber. Am going Malakand this afternoon. Don't worry about exaggerated colourful press reports. Am thoroughly enjoying myself. Am quite well. Returning Delhi twentysecond forenoon with Dr. Khan Saheb. Inform Bapu.

Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50,* Vol. 3, p. 292.

15. The Future of Waziristan[1]

The jirgas at Miranshah and Razmak did not utter a word of protest against the recent bombardment in Waziristan, which affected their very being. Instead they protested against what happened at Calcutta, thousands of miles off.[2] It is a striking fact.

Waziristan has rich cultivable land but nobody has made the right approach to the tribal people and taught them how to develop their natural resources. It suited certain interests to keep them in their present position of ignorance. I am convinced that modern civilization can easily enter their lives but nobody has given thought to it.

Some Maliks met me in a jirga in Waziristan. They get certain benefits from the Government which other sections of the population do not get.

1. Interview to a foreign press correspondent, Torkham, 20 October 1946. From *The Hindustan Times,* 22 October 1946.
2. A tribal Malik accused Nehru's Government of treating the Muslims harshly in the Indian provinces and threatened to avenge the ill-treatment by the Congress of the Muslims.

16. Assurance to Pathans[1]

Today the great tree known as British Raj which has been overshadowing us and sheltering us is in the process of being uprooted and we will be entirely on our own. We want to build up something in its place, and we don't want freedom for India in which one nation will rule over others.

In fact we want no ruler or despot, but we want a system of Government in which every nationality in India will be completely free to govern its own affairs. I have come here to learn and to know you and to make myself known to you. We will have to face the most intricate common problems which have arisen owing to imminent disappearance of the British Raj. Obviously, we must sit down together and consult each other in the solving of these problems. It is possible that we may have to come again. It is possible that your leaders may have to come to New Delhi so that whatever is done is done in conference without fear of misunderstandings or misconceptions on either side.

1. Speech at a meeting at Malakand, 20 October 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 22 October 1946.

17. Olaf Caroe's Note on Interview with Nehru[1]

He made no d rect charge that Political Agents had been behind the demonstrations, but he accused our Indian subordinates of this kind of machination. He also charged the Political Agents in the Khyber and the Malakand (both happen to be Indians), and I gathered the Deputy Commissioners of Peshawar and Mardan also, with inefficiency in having been unable to prevent the demonstrations. I had told him, a party approach to the tribal problem was bound to fail,... but it was fatal to take round a party politician like Abdul Ghaffar Khan.... His answer to this was a tirade against the

1. Held at Malakand on 20 October 1946. Olaf Caroe's letter to Wavell, 23 October 1946. Extracts. R/3/1/92, I.O.L.R., London.

League, and an assertion that it was not his wont to desert his old friends, of whom Abdul Ghaffar Khan was the chief. He also said that he was coming again as soon as he could, and then gave me a lecture on the authoritarian habits of the I.C.S.... I asked him what he had achieved by this visit at this moment, to which his answer was that he had learnt many things, good and bad, and instructed himself.... Finally I asked him why at critical junctures he always set out on his own with preconceived and published ideas and without hearing the other side, making it hard for him to adjust his attitude later. He said he felt himself unable to comment on his own proceedings, but one thing he must impress on me, and that was that there must be a complete change in the method of Frontier control, and what he termed "the romance of the frontier" must come to an end as soon as possible.

18. Note of G.C.S. Curtis' on Talk with Nehru[1]

He first talked at length about the character of the national movement and explained the moral damage done to the nation by the British police state. He then enlarged on the difference between his Government and that of the British. Next with a relevance I could not appreciate he told me that the better type of Indian had felt unable to join Government service during the last 20 years or so. Then he proceeded to explain that what made difficulties between the present Government and the present officials was not mistrust but difference of outlook. He agreed that in practice it came to the same thing.

He painted in glowing terms the future of India and emphasised its present importance in the world. That led him to talk of the Indian Diplomatic Service, to explain that he would want many officers for it, and that Englishmen would not be required. The impression which he left on me was that

1. Held at Malakand, 20 October 1946. Curtis' letter to Olaf Caroe, 23 October 1946. R/3/1/92, I.O.L.R., London. Extracts. Curtis was Deputy Commissioner, Mardan, N.W.F.P.

he would like to get rid of every British official, but that so far as the Frontier was concerned he did not know how to replace them. Also I gathered that in the India of the future the Frontier will be such small beer that he was not very much interested in it.

19. The Problems of the Tribesmen[1]

I went to the tribal area to meet the brave Pathans and shall go again. We fought the biggest empire in the world without faltering; we cannot be deterred by goondas, hooligans and stone-throwers.

If drops of our blood fell on Pathan soil today,[2] I regard them as the seed which will bring good to all of us—to Pathans and to India. For the last five or six days I have tasted some sweet and bitter experiences. Many persons tried to stop me and they said, 'Don't go to the tribal area', but I felt it my duty to go.[3] I am very happy that I came and met you Pathans for nothing on earth would I have foregone the experiences of the last few days. What are the facts? We had gone there with a message of love to meet the people. Some people tried to create disturbance and stones were thrown. We had left the arrangements to those whose duty it was to make the arrangements. But what kind of arrangements were made ?

I thank the Red Shirts for the magnificent welcome and the address they have accorded me. Not for anything on earth would I have foregone the experience which I have tasted during the last five days.

1. Speech at Sardaryab, 21 October 1946. From *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times* of 23 October 1946.
2. Demonstrators stopped Nehru's car when he left Malakand Fort for Peshawar. They threw stones and smashed the windscreen. Nehru, Ghaffar Khan and Khan Sahib received minor injuries.
3. Olaf Caroe, Governor of the North-West Frontier Province, suggested a postponement of Nehru's visit. A number of agency tribes also sent telegrams that a visit to the Frontier at this time was ill-advised and undesirable.

I come to you not as the Vice-President of the Indian Government but as an old comrade. Governments come and go—we do not know how long this will last—but our relations will for ever remain unchanged.

After fifty years of struggle, we are about to be free but hundreds of difficulties face us. We cannot allow these difficulties to make us sit with folded hands or be worried or despondent. No power on earth can make our great country bend its head. We shall walk on the earth with our heads high in this revolutionary world. But only stupidity on our part can check our progress. The liberty we are fighting for is for every one of India's forty crores, for all its various individual classes.

Certain groups and bodies are trying to lay the foundation of their future work on hatred and civil strife. When we fought the British Government, we fought it with dignity. In 1930 we shed our own blood here and in other parts of the country.[4] But we never sowed the seeds of hatred between anyone.

Big issues can be settled only by people with big minds and not by pygmies. We opposed British imperialism without faltering and without respite, but at all times even a single Englishman could go into the streets without fear of being molested. That was because we never taught hatred against any Englishman. But today methods of a different kind are being followed. These are the methods of dacoits, murderers and goondas, but we, who opposed the world's greatest empire without fear, will not be deterred by petty onslaughts. We will not be browbeaten by such things. It is sheer imbecility to think that such methods will succeed.

These things will awaken us to a greater realisation of our duty. They must strengthen us. On the other hand, the seed of communal hatred, which is being sown by others, will take.a long time to be eradicated and the bitter tree that will grow will present them with even more bitter fruit. That is why the Prophets have given us the message of love. I warn that hatred begets hatred and those who are sowing hatred today will get hatred. Those who point to the path of battle will get battle.

The British came and occupied the vacant throne of India, because there was nobody to claim it and we were fighting among ourselves. At least they served their own nation by exploiting our differences. How can we blame others if we cannot protect our own homes ?

When you hear what happened at Malakand you may justly be angry. But I ask you not to nurture passion but to turn that passion into a constructive force, that will carry us forward rather than backward. A few drops

4. On 23 April 1930, when liquor shops in Peshawar were picketed as part of the civil disobedience movement and Abdul Ghaffar Khan was arrested. The violent agitation which then erupted in Peshawar and tribal areas was suppressed by the army. About two to three hundred agitators were killed and many more were wounded.

of my blood and the blood of our leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, were shed today outside the Malakand Fort. I think it is for the good of both the Pathans and of India, because they may prove to be the seed of our future understanding. I harbour no anger whatsoever against the tribesmen for what has happened, because I know they are a simple and innocent people who have been incited by others. While you Red Shirts could not contact them, others who went to incite them were able to do so.[5] They were told by these inciters 'Nehru is coming to snatch away your freedom. He is coming to establish Hindu dominion over you. Jawaharlal Nehru caused the slaughter of Muslims in Calcutta and other places'.

In the face of these incitements it was but natural that these tribesmen should feel incensed. The tribesmen were told—I do not know by whom—that bombing of Waziristan was ordered by the Congress Government. Actually bombs were dropped some weeks before Congress assumed office at the Centre. We stopped the bombing. The tribesmen are a brave people and I have the highest regard for brave people. I want to go to the tribal area to meet the tribesmen and I shall go again. Theirs is a complicated problem. I do not know what measures and arrangements will be necessary, but whatever is done, will be done by mutual consent.

There are kidnappings, murders and disturbances. These things, of course, will be stopped with a strong hand, but this does not mean that there will be any interference with the tribesmen's liberty. In fact their liberties will be enlarged.

Tomorrow I go again to be steeped in a hundred important matters, but I assure that the thoughts of the Pathans and their rugged homeland will remain deeply imprinted on my mind.

5. On 22 September 1946, Abdul Ghaffar Khan accused the Muslim League of propaganda in the tribal areas that Nehru had ordered bombing in Waziristan. In fact, it was done without his knowledge.

20. Telegram to Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

Deeply regret inconvenience caused to you and party at Cairo. Hope rest of journey pleasant and suitable accommodation in New York. I am having

1. 21 October 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 6(77)-cc/46, p. 169, National Archives of India.

very interesting tour in Frontier areas. Do not worry about exaggerated and colourful reports. I am thoroughly enjoying myself and am quite well. Hope to return Delhi on 22nd. Good wishes to entire delegation.

21. Note on Tour of the Tribal Areas[1]

CONFIDENTIAL

My brief tour of the tribal areas was intended to provide me with a general over-all picture of the conditions prevailing there. I did not think that within a few days I could study local conditions with any thoroughness. But I had hoped that even a brief visit would enable me to get a background for further study of the problems of these areas. I had hoped also to meet informally some people of these areas as well as officers serving there.

2. My main object was to get material for the better understanding of these problems and then to endeavour, in consultation with others, to develop the kind of policy we should pursue in the future. It was obvious that a long-standing and complicated problem could not be disposed of easily and every attempt at solution would have to face difficulties. We had to profit by past experience which was considerable and which to some extent showed us both the advantages and disadvantages of the various policies hitherto pursued. It was obvious that that past policy had not been wholly successful, or else there would be no problem today. It had been successful in some measure and produced an unstable equilibrium which lasted for some time but was upset periodically. Apart from the success or failure of past policies, it was evident that new developments in India necessitated a new approach in many ways. Indeed the proposal to have an Advisory Committee, partly

1. New Delhi, 24 October 1946. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 816-825. Nehru toured the tribal areas in the North-West Frontier Province from 16 to 21 October 1946.

for tribal areas, in connection with the Constituent Assembly, itself necessitated a new approach. Far-reaching political changes in India would inevitably produce their repercussions on the tribal people. Even apart from political changes, the dynamism which is so evident in India today and which is reflected in political and economic movements and sometimes in conflicts, would shake up the Frontier. In the past the Frontier was largely an isolated area but, whether we liked it or not, it could not remain isolated in the same sense in the future.

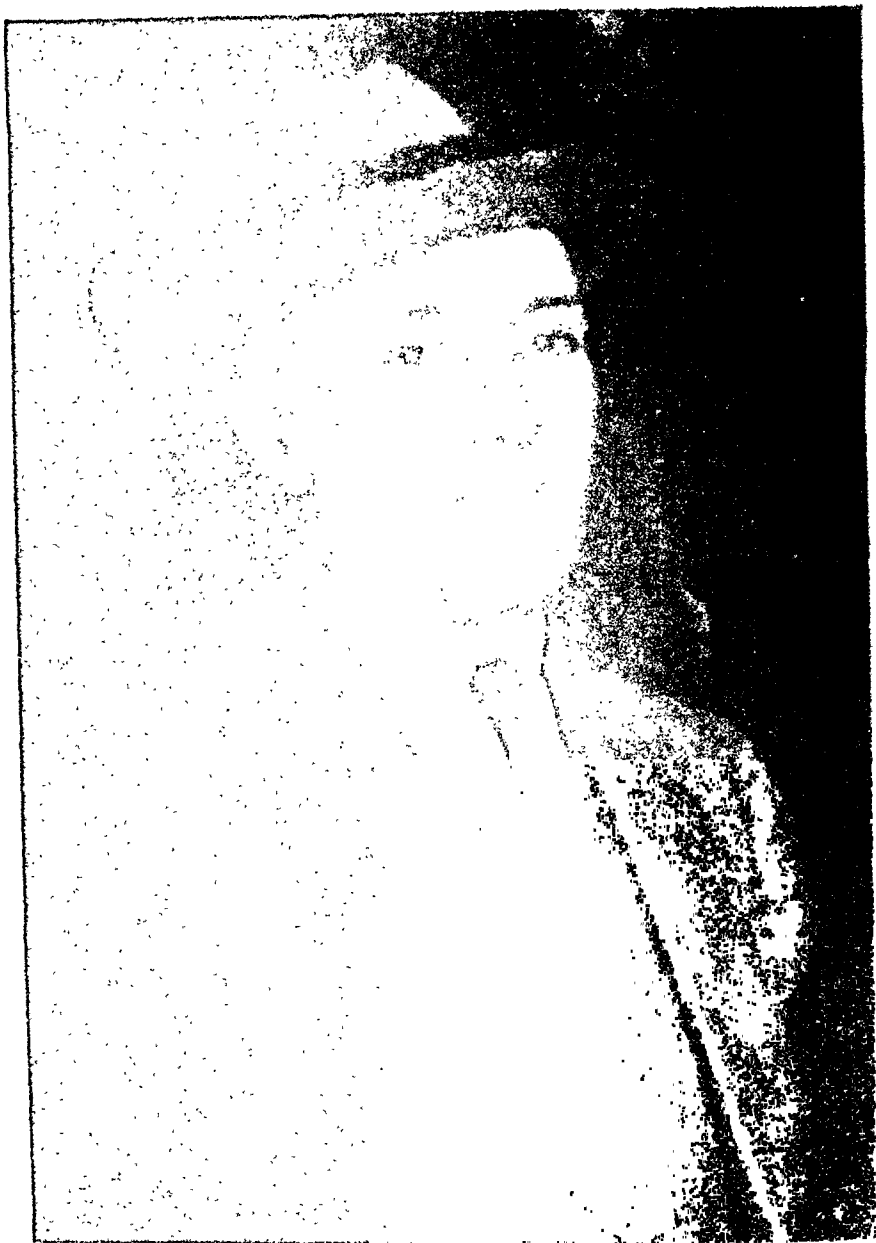
3. All these factors made it necessary to reconsider the problem of the tribal areas in this new setting. Such reconsideration would involve our relations with Afghanistan and the policy that Afghanistan wanted to pursue in regard to the tribes on the other side of the border.

4. Last year a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Major-General F.I.S. Tuker[2] to consider the Frontier problem. The principal terms of reference of this committee were to consider the reduction of the regular forces employed in maintaining order in the tribal areas of the N.W. Frontier and in Baluchistan. These terms of reference were rather limited in scope, but the report is very helpful in considering the entire problem. The recommendations of this committee were not unanimous, the majority generally accepting the present set-up while the minority wanted immediate disarmament of the tribes. In view of existing circumstances, however, we have to consider this problem in all its aspects and not merely in its military aspect.

5. I do not propose at this stage to go more deeply into this problem or to indicate what our future line of approach should be. I should like to think much more about it and to discuss it with other people who have given thought to it or who have experience of these areas. It is clear, however, that the economic aspect has always to be kept in view. While our approach must necessarily be a friendly one, it cannot be a weak one. Friendship will be understood and appreciated by the tribal people, weakness will be misunderstood. Every approach, therefore, must have strength behind it and at the same time there should be the fullest opportunities for consultation with representatives of the tribes.

6. In considering the future, two basic factors have to be borne in mind. (1) It is probable that land routes between India and Afghanistan will develop

2. Francis Ivan Simms Tuker (1894-1967); director of military training, G.H.Q., India, 1940-41; Commanding 34 Infantry Division, 1941; Commanding 4 Infantry Division, 1942-44; Chairman, Frontier Committee, India, 1944; G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Command, India, 1946-47; retired, April 1948; author of *While Memory Serves* (1949).

OUTSIDE 10 DOWNING STREET, DECEMBER 1946

OUTSIDE 10 DOWNING STREET, DECEMBER 1946

in importance. India, which for a long stretch of years has been more or less isolated on its land frontier, is now bound to develop closer relations with its neighbours both on the North-West and North-East. A far greater volume of trade and passenger traffic will flow in both directions. A growing air traffic across the frontiers will also make a difference. It is possible also, though this will take some time, that railway lines might be constructed so as ultimately to connect the Chinese railway system through India with the Western Asian railway system and Europe. All these factors will tend to upset the traditional economy of the Frontier areas. They are likely to have far-reaching consequences in the social structure of the tribes. (2) It seems to me, though I speak with partial knowledge, that a class conflict is slowly developing and will develop more in the tribal areas. There will be a conflict between the interests of most of the Maliks or tribal leaders and the greater part of the population. In a sense this will be a conflict between the haves and the have-nots. Any policy that is framed by us will, to some extent, have to take this into consideration. Do we support the existing social structure, in other words, do we support the semi-feudal heads as against the mass of the population, or do we help the poorer people to progress even though this might be opposed by the Maliks and their like? As far as I know official policy thus far has been to deal with and support the Maliks and we have ignored the others. Probably this was the only feasible policy in the past. It was much simpler to deal with them; but it may not be so simple in the future and we may have to choose. I have no doubt that we should not try to preserve in any way the same feudal structure or to help the Maliks to retain their special position where this comes in the way of the development of the people generally. Probably our system of paying allowances to the tribes is chiefly beneficial to these Maliks.

7. This system of paying allowances has been rightly described as a kind of hush-money or blackmail. It may have been a lesser evil, but obviously it is something that is not desirable. It is often said that if a part of this money had been used for developing the area, a major change might have taken place by now. Apart from this, payment of money in this way is demoralising to the giver and the taker alike. Inevitably it leads to corruption and to a lowering of the tone of the public service. Perhaps it is difficult to stop this payment suddenly, but I have no doubt that it will have to be stopped some time or other and the money utilised for better purposes which benefit the mass of the population.

8. It is said that any educational or like approach is resented by the tribal people as they consider this an attempt to penetrate and infiltrate. This is understandable. Probably if the approach was made in a different way and after some kind of psychological change had taken place, it could not be

so resented. An immediate approach which is likely to be appreciated and to do immense good is through the films. Naturally these films will be of an educational character. They could even be used for literacy campaigns as well as to broaden the horizon of the Pathan in regard to India and the world.

9. It seems essential to me that the barriers which had been erected around the tribal areas preventing free movements should be largely done away with. People from the Frontier Province should be allowed to go there and people from the tribal areas should be allowed to come to the Frontier Province.[3] There are some risks in this, but those risks have to be taken. With this freedom of movement a wider appreciation of each other will necessarily follow. I understand that some steps forward in this direction have already been taken. I am glad of this.

10. Most of the officers of the Political Service have been drawn from a special cadre and they have specialized in this particular work. Apparently they are interchangeable with the officers serving in the Indian States, though there is an essential dissimilarity between the two kinds of work. They have undoubtedly specialized in the Frontier areas and know a great deal about the tribal people and their problems. Nevertheless, it seems to me that living cut off from the wider currents in India, they have become limited in outlook. As with all permanent services, they are convinced that their old way of dealing with things is the right way and any radical change will be harmful. While this applies to most permanent services, it applies in particular to those serving in the Frontier who deal with a particular set of problems and often lack awareness of the big changes that are taking place all over the world and in India in particular. This limited outlook must come in the way of dealing with the problems in conformity with modern standards.

11. This note does not pretend to deal with any basic problem. It is just an attempt to note down some impressions. I have many other impressions and many other ideas, but I should like to consider them more fully and to discuss them with others before I say much about them. My visit, though intended for other purposes, led me into a strange atmosphere and into unexpected conflicts. For the present my mind is full of them and these experiences have naturally influenced my way of thinking powerfully. I do not propose to write in any detail about these experiences at present, but something I must say.

3. On 6 November 1946, Weightman noted that the barriers had been erected for the safety of travellers and not to keep out the Pathans, who could always cross the border easily.

12. It was evident that my visit was not welcome to the officers of the Political Department. Sir Olaf Caroe had pointed out to me before I went that I had not chosen a suitable time[4] and that I should postpone my visit. I told him then that to change my programme would have bad consequences and I saw no reason why I should do so. I was going quietly and peacefully just to meet people. While I realised then that my visit was not welcome, I had no idea that there was an active hostility to my going

13. I found soon enough after my arrival in the Frontier that I was surrounded by a kind of hostile atmosphere. There was courtesy enough for which I am grateful, but at every step I was reminded that I had come against the wishes of the official hierarchy and that I would be responsible myself for any consequences.

14. The incidents that occurred later on during the tour confirmed this impression. I knew even before my visit to the Frontier that considerable agitation had been carried on by the Muslim League in opposition to my visit. That did not matter much though the kind of statements that were being made by certain Mullahs and others were highly provocative and false.[5] I had hoped that the announcement of the inclusion of members of the Muslim League in the Interim Government might make a difference. So far as I was concerned, I had no desire to speak on political party issues. On arrival at Peshawar I learnt of the violence indulged in by Muslim Leaguers under the direct leadership of one of their prominent men.[6] This was an extraordinary incident occurring as it did in an area where no such thing had happened previously, and normally the entry of people is regulated. It seemed to indicate either gross mismanagement or a passive acquiescence, if nothing more, in what took place. There had been so much talk about demonstrations etc. and so many warnings by officials that at any rate they should have been fully prepared. I cannot imagine that they could not have stopped this exhibition of crude violence right near the aerodrome if they had so wished it.

4. Olaf Caroe wrote to Wavell on 23 October 1946 that he had spent three days in Delhi to persuade Nehru to abandon his tour of the tribal territory.
5. The report of the Chief Secretary, North-West Frontier Province, of 6 November 1946 said that the Mullah of Manki had been sent by the Muslim League into the tribal territory for the purpose of whipping up support for the Muslim League. The Mullah made inflammatory speeches against the Congress in Khyber Pass, Gandak, and the Malakand Agency.
6. A crowd of Muslim League volunteers carrying black flags demonstrated outside the aerodrome on Nehru's arrival in Peshawar on 16 October 1946. The demonstrators were led by Khan Abdul Qaiyum, leader of the Muslim League Party in the Frontier Assembly.

15. The other occurrences that took place left a feeling of doubt in my mind. They did not appear to me to be entirely normal or spontaneous. It seemed odd that the tribal Maliks should behave as they did unless they had been given a hint to do so. In some places I was definitely told that some relatively minor official, like the Assistant Political Agent, had deliberately told them what to say and what to do, further that he had taken good care to invite only those persons who fell in with his wishes. I had been informed of this even before the incidents occurred. I had no means of verifying all these statements, but it seemed to me after some close cross-examination that there was some truth in them. In any event there was no inherent improbability.

16. The fact that at Jandola, where my programme had been fixed up rather suddenly, I had a warm welcome, stood out rather prominently. It contrasted with the places where my visit had been pre-arranged.

17. At the Khyber we were told that a number of mischief-makers had gathered somewhere on the road near Landi Kotal. In spite of this previous intimation, no steps seemed to have been taken to avoid the incident that occurred. When it did occur the situation was handled properly enough. It did seem to me, however, that a little foresight could have avoided it, or minimised it greatly.

18. The most remarkable incident, however, occurred just as we were leaving Malakand. We had been told previously that a group of persons were waiting outside the gate to create trouble. This information had been passed on to the Political Agent who was with us. When we started, the Political Agent's car preceded us. Immediately after emerging from the gate of the Agency, we saw two buses full of persons standing across the road and partly blocking it and about two or three dozen persons standing by the roadside. Immediately our car was stoned. The Political Agent obviously saw what was happening but he took no step. His car slowly proceeded. The men in the buses came down and surrounded our car, smashed all the glass and made a dangerous and murderous attack upon us. Meanwhile the Political Agent calmly proceeded ahead leaving us completely isolated in the hands of this relatively small and hostile crowd. Ultimately we got through when Dr. Khan Sahib took a revolver from the orderly in the car and brandished it about without firing it. The sight of this one revolver was quite sufficient to frighten the crowd who made way for us to pass. Indeed some of them were so frightened that they fell down as they were going back. This showed how easy it was to deal with this crowd. It was pure chance that we were not very seriously injured (although Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was badly hurt) or even murdered.

19. The behaviour of Nawab Shaikh Mahbub Ali,[7] the Political Agent at Malakand, in these extraordinary circumstances can only be explained by one of two hypotheses: either he was *completely incompetent and incapable* of dealing with any situation or he approved of what took place and, therefore, did not intervene. It was stated to us by several persons that previously he had actually encouraged people to behave in this manner. But there is not sufficient proof for this so far as I know. The fact, however, remains that he behaved as not a decent individual ought to have behaved and certainly as not a man in responsible charge should have behaved. I am sorry to have to say this about an old officer in the Political Service whose guest I was for the day and night that I spent at Malakand. As a host he was very courteous and hospitable. But I have come reluctantly to the conclusion that his behaviour as a Political Agent and as one in charge of our party was disgraceful. He did not strike me as a person lacking in intelligence. Therefore it could not be just incompetence that led to his misbehaviour. Whether it was incompetence or something worse is not very important. In either event he showed himself to be completely unfit for any responsible charge.

20. Normally when such a violent incident happens there should be a proper inquiry. Whether any attempt is being made to hold such an inquiry, I do not know. Of course, an inquiry to be worthwhile must be through independent persons and not those who may be under the influence of the very persons who are implicated. In regard to the Malakand incident the known and established and admitted facts are so obvious that some action is immediately needed. It is possible that a proper inquiry might lead to further incriminating evidence; it cannot lessen the responsibility for misbehaviour of the Political Agent. This particular incident, even more than others, stands out during my tour and has attracted widespread attention. The vast number of newspapermen with me have given considerable publicity to it. It cannot therefore and should not be ignored or minimised. The morale and prestige of the service will suffer greatly if any individual connected with it is tolerated for such patent misbehaviour.

21. I have referred to the large number of newspapermen who accompanied me. As is usual with them, they have given publicity to colourful and sometimes exaggerated accounts of what happened. Sometimes entirely fictitious things have been said as when it was stated that I was going to be

7. Mahbub Ali Khan; Deputy Commissioner, Dera Ismail Khan, 1936, Kohat, 1938; Political Agent, Malakand, 1945-46; suspended, 8 January to 3 April 1947; exonerated and reinstated in Indian Political Service; appointed Political Agent, Malakand, 13 September 1947.

kidnapped. Most of these journalists were eye-witnesses and they recorded their impressions or what they were told by others. Some of their accounts can be corrected or denied in part, but it is not easily possible just to contradict eye-witnesses' accounts even though they might be coloured and exaggerated. They were there and as newspapermen they would claim to say what they saw. While there is much exaggeration, there is a great deal of fact behind what they say and it is not easy to deny everything or to distinguish between fact and fiction.

22. I am sorry that many of the press accounts criticised and condemned the officers of the Political Service as a whole. It is always unfair to refer to a group in this way. Personally I found some excellent officers who, in spite of short acquaintance, impressed me as capable and earnest. Some other officers did not impress me at all.

23. I should like to say that the military officers who met me were very good to me and I found them as a whole a fine body of men, both Indian and English. They had their limited spheres of activity and presumably they functioned effectively. Of the civilian officers, apart from individuals who were good and others who were not so good, I have the impression that they were wedded to a system which was out of date. It was not, therefore, so much their fault as the fault of the system that they could not fully appreciate the changes that were taking place.

24. It seemed to me a wrong system for an officer to have a dual function and a dual responsibility—one relating to the Provincial Government and the other to the Governor acting as Agent to the Governor-General for the tribal areas. Such a dual responsibility might have functioned successfully enough when the authority at the top was the same for both purposes. In fact there was then no dual responsibility at all. But in present circumstances, when the Provincial Government is something entirely different from the Governor acting in the exercise of his own discretion, this dual function is an anachronism and must inevitably produce confusion and conflict. Indeed duality should not exist at all even at the top. This means a change in the whole constitutional structure. Meanwhile it seems desirable that in practice this duality at the top should be eliminated or at any rate greatly lessened. It is absurd for the Provincial Government to be kept in complete ignorance of what is happening in the tribal areas.

25. The Provincial Government in the N.W.F.P., as in other provinces, represents a democratic form of Government. It represents a Government by the majority group or party in the Assembly which is supposed to represent a majority of the voters in the province. In the N.W.F.P. there is at present

a Congress Government. Normally, therefore, there should be harmony between not only the Government and its officials but also between the officials and the Congress Party and its leaders. It was evident that there is no such harmony and indeed there is plenty of suspicion on both sides. It is impossible for a government to function effectively if its officials do not give it loyal service. It may be difficult to write off the past or to forget the memories of past conflicts. Nevertheless that past must not be allowed to influence the present when the whole structure has changed. My impression was definitely that even now the official hierarchy look upon the Congress not only with extreme dislike but with some hostility. They submit to the Congress Government with reluctance and do not give it the cooperation that it should receive from its officials. To some extent this is to be found, in varying degrees, in other provinces also. But it was most marked in the Frontier Province where the traditions are somewhat different from other provinces. The permanent official group does not think of itself as a service but rather as expert administrators and statesmen far above the strife of parties and the like. Permanent services should keep apart from party strife. But they have no business to function as superior persons. In a democratic form of government they must serve loyally whatever government is in power. During the past there has been so much conflict between these officials and the Congress that both parties are full of ill-will against each other. Statements are often made by Congress leaders and others which are not always fair to the permanent officials. On the side of the officials action is indulged in which is unfair to the Provincial Government and more especially to the Congress Party which is supposed to control that government.

26. Everyone knows that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is the leader of the Congress in the Frontier Province. Indeed he is one of the top-ranking leaders of the Congress in India and is greatly respected. Yet I found a bitter dislike of and hostility to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan among the senior officials. I should have thought that it was a primary duty of the officials to gain the goodwill of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, both because of his pre-eminent position in the Frontier and because he is the head of the organization which is supposed to control the provincial government. Instead of this he is kept at arm's length and it is made pretty obvious that the high officials do not like him or approve of his ways. It is not for officials to approve or disapprove of democratic leaders of popular governments and assemblies. Strong exception was taken to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan accompanying me during my tour of the tribal areas. That objection itself showed an extreme lack of appreciation of the democratic process and of the present government in the province. In a democratic form of government the leaders, whether they are in office or not, do not lose their essential identity. They have to function both as leaders of governments and as leaders of parties and of the people

generally. The man who is out of office today may be in office tomorrow or, if he himself is not in office, his colleague may be there. Colleagues do not part company or desert one another because one is in office and the other is not. Snobbery is not a virtue at any time, much less in democracy. The problems before us are essentially political and economic, but the psychological aspect of them is equally important. As between Englishmen and Indians, our past history has thrown up psychological barriers which prevent understanding. We often misjudge one another's motives and actions. Perhaps these barriers will gradually fade away when the basic causes for them are gone. Meanwhile we have to face a situation which is difficult for both and there should be forbearance on either side during this period of transition. It is clear that the English official in India will play a progressively decreasing role. Indian services will be manned ultimately by Indians alone. Because of this there is no great future in India for the British official. But India will welcome the friendly cooperation of Britishers for some time o come provided that is based on a recognition of the spirit of the times. Any attempt on the part of British officials to carry on in the old way is bound to be resented. This applies equally to Indian officials who have tried to function in the old way. Indeed an Indian official of that type has often less place in India today than a British official. There is still plenty of room in India for British officials and there is no reason why they should not fulfil an essential role in this period of transition. They will be welcomed but always on a new basis and a new association.

27. Indians must remember that British officials in India have to face a difficult situation and it is not easy for them to fit in always with changing conditions. They have often to face unjust criticism. They have the feeling that there is no special place for them in India in the future and that they are not wanted. Inevitably they seek support from one another and are rather cut off from the flowing current of national life. British officials in India should remember that India is dynamic today and her long past of suppression makes her people irritable and intolerant of those who are associated with this suppression. There is today a bubbling life in India observable even more in the common people than in the upper classes. This life often takes a wrong turn. Nevertheless it is the hope of India and any suppression of it is to do injury to India. In any event it cannot be suppressed. This fact has to be recognised and people should adapt themselves to it.

28. This note has grown much longer and has covered a wider field than I had intended when I started dictating it. It may, however, help my colleagues and others who see it to have a glimpse of my mind. This Frontier visit has added to my education a great deal. Personally I think the visit has done good in many ways. It has brought to the front not only in my mind but in

the minds of others many problems which were rather covered up. That in itself is a gain. It will make both officials and the people of the Frontier Province and the tribal areas to think hard about these problems. A shake-up of a placid surface may result in some unfortunate consequences, but still waters are apt to become stagnant and stagnant pools are not healthy.

29. A copy of this note should be sent to H.E. the Viceroy and to H.E. the Governor of the N.W.F.P.

22. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
26th October, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
As you will no doubt appreciate I have been greatly exercised by events in the Frontier Province and the tribal areas during my recent visit there. I have prepared a note on the subject[2] a copy of which I am sending to Sir Olaf Caroe. This note, though very long, was hurriedly written late at night and is not entirely satisfactory from my point of view. I have had to write it in the midst of numerous other preoccupations and worries. Nevertheless it gives a picture of part of my mind. I am sending a copy of it to you for your information.

I am also sending a copy of a letter which I have addressed to Sir Olaf Caroe.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. R/3/1/92, I.O.L.R., London.
2. See the preceding item.

23. To Olaf Caroe[1]

New Delhi
26th October 1946

Dear Sir Olaf,
You will no doubt appreciate that my mind has been considerably exercised

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 814-815.

by the events that took place during my Frontier visit. In spite of heavy work here and having to face difficult situations since my return, I have been thinking mostly of the Frontier and the tribal areas. I do not wish to come to any conclusions about the wider policy to be adopted there till I have given much more thought to the matter.

But certain immediate issues arise. The events that happened there and more specially the violence and attacks on us have agitated the public mind greatly. This is quite natural and to be expected. I have already received notice of questions in the Assembly and the matter is likely to be raised there in some shape or another. I have to make up my mind how to deal with it. I shall do so, in so far as wider policies are concerned, rather vaguely and generally. But the question of violent attacks cannot be ignored or postponed.

I do not know what you propose to do about it or have already done in regard to it. But it is clear that when such occurrences take place there should be some proper enquiry in regard to them and action taken on the basis of that enquiry. But a certain difficulty arises. Such an enquiry, if it is to have any value, must be of a kind to inspire public confidence. If the enquiry is conducted by people who themselves are not trusted in this matter, then it does not do much good. That is for you to consider. You will realise that there is a big hiatus between you as the Governor and the A.G.G. and the Provincial Government and those whom they represent. There can be no cooperation when there is this lack of confidence in each other and a desire to pull in different directions. This is a larger question which cannot be dealt with immediately but which nevertheless affects the situation. It cannot be ignored.

Meanwhile, apart from the many other incidents that took place, one incident stands out. This is the Malakand affair in which the Political Agent, Nawab Shaikh Mahbub Ali, was particularly concerned. This was so obvious and patent that the question of enquiry even hardly arises. It has been given a good deal of publicity in the press. Some of these press accounts are exaggerated. Nevertheless there is a good deal of truth in them which cannot be denied. I was myself a witness to what happened as were several others. It seems to me impossible that Shaikh Mahbub Ali should continue in his present post. Indeed he has shown himself completely unfit for any responsible post and this matter should be taken in hand immediately.

In spite of my many preoccupations here I have dictated a long note[2] on my visit to the Frontier and the tribal areas. I am afraid this note is too long and too diffuse. It was dictated at midnight. Such as it is I am sending it to you as it will give you some idea at least of how I am thinking.

2. See *ante*, item 21.

It has been decided that Dr. Dring,[3] the Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, should be transferred. The main reason for this was that he did not have the confidence of the Provincial Government. This was evident to me from what Dr. Khan Sahib told me. It seems to me the sooner he leaves the Peshawar district the better.

I greatly regret that events should have happened which have brought a certain personal element in the consideration of public problems. That is always unfortunate. But perhaps it is as well that attention should be drawn rather forcibly to these problems. This might help in their earlier solution.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Arthur John Dring (b. 1902); Political Agent, South Waziristan, 1940-42; Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar, 1945-46; Chief Secretary, North-West Frontier Province, 1947; Prime Minister, Bahawalpur, 1948-52.

24. Enquiry into Disturbances during Frontier Tour[1]

Lala Deshbandhu Gupta asked whether Nehru's attention had been drawn to the serious allegations made by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mehr Chand Khanna in their press statements against the Political Department in connection with the hooliganism indulged in by a section of Muslims during his (Nehru's) visit to the tribal areas in the N.W.F.P. and what steps the Government proposed to take in the matter.

Jawaharlal Nehru : The statements[2] referred to contain chiefly expressions of opinion and some facts. There is no doubt that there was a great deal of violence during the course of the visit to the N.W.F. Province and the tribal areas. This violence resulted in injury and damage. It was fortunate that this injury and damage were not much greater than they actually were. As to who was behind this organized violence various opinions

1. Reply to a short notice question in the Legislative Assembly, 29 October 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VII, 1946, 28 October 1946 - 11 November 1946, pp. 173-176. Nehru's remarks are given in full, and the rest of the relevant proceedings summarised.
2. The statements appeared in *The Hindustan Times* of 18, 21 and 22 October 1946.

can be formed and inferences drawn. It would not be right to apportion blame fully without more knowledge. The matter is being enquired into.

It is evident that the references to the Political Department are not accurate. Probably what is meant is that some officials of the Local Administration both in the Frontier Province and the tribal areas are concerned. This is a matter again for further enquiry.

In view of the confusion that prevails regarding the Political Department it is desirable to clarify the constitutional position. The Political Department as such deals with the Indian States only through Residents and Political Agents accredited to States and groups of States. The External Affairs Department is something separate from the Political Department and is *inter alia* responsible for Frontier affairs and tribal areas. This Department is an integral part of the Central Government under the control of the Governor-General-in-Council. The Political Department on the other hand is the Secretariat of the Crown Representative and is controlled by the Political Adviser to the Crown Representative. This is not under the Central Government. The only constitutional link between the Political and External Affairs Departments is provided by the Viceroy in his dual capacity as Governor-General and Crown Representative.

The confusion regarding the Political Department has apparently arisen from the fact that till now there has been a common Indian Political Service. The officers of this service belong to a joint cadre which serves both the Crown Representative and External Affairs Department. All these officers have been normally called Political Officers.

The Indian Political Service has been drawn in the past chiefly from the Indian Civil Service and the Indian army. The I.C.S. has provided about 1/3rd of the cadre and the Indian army about 2/3rds. There are also a few persons in it from the Indian Police and some who have been promoted from the Provincial Service. The Secretary of State for India is ultimately in charge of this Service. The Political Adviser to the Crown Representative is the senior officer of the Service.

Before the formation of the Interim Government the Viceroy functioned as Member for External Affairs. He was and is also the Crown Representative.

Lala Deshbandhu Gupta wanted to know whether it was a fact that Nehru was advised not to proceed to the tribal areas by the Political Department.

JN: I am sorry that in spite of my explanation as to what the Political Department is, the Honourable Member goes on using those words. The Political Department as such has nothing to do with me or with giving me advice or not. It is a department dealing with the Indian States; but if he asks me whether I was advised to go there or not, certainly I was advised by some to go and by others not to go.

Lala Deshbandhu Gupta asked if it was a fact that the programme and arrangements made for his tour were kept secret from the ministers of the North-West Frontier Province.

JN: I believe that the final programme was really drawn up probably—I do not know—may be a day or two before my arrival there. What was kept secret from whom I do not know, but it is a fact that it was not drawn up till almost just a day or two before my arrival. Probably some people did not know.

Ahmed E.H. Jaffer asked if it was true that the Provincial Governor specially came down to suggest a postponement of Nehru's visit.

JN: That is a perfectly correct report.

Sardar Mangal Singh asked whether inquiries were being carried on in this matter.

JN: The matter has been referred to the people in charge in those areas for inquiry.

Abdur Rahman Siddiqi enquired whether British Indian law prevailed in what were known as the tribal areas.

JN: No. British Indian law or any other law applying in British India does not prevail there, except in so far as sometimes armies and troops are made to march there and they take such steps as they are ordered to. The House will remember that the so-called tribal areas represent a belt of territory between what is known as British India and Afghanistan; that is, in the conception of India those tribal territories are included, but not in British India. The boundary of India is between the tribal territories and Afghanistan, but British India which is British administered India ends where tribal territories begin.

Abdur Rahman Siddiqi asked how the question of an inquiry arose in that area which was *Ghair Ilaqa* or foreign territory.

JN: When one refers to an inquiry, it does not refer to an inquiry in regard to the people of those areas, but to the officials concerned in those areas who function under the various departments of the Government of India or the Provincial Government as the case may be.

Lala Deshbandhu Gupta asked if it was a fact that whereas Congressmen were allowed no access to the tribal areas, others who were opposed to Nehru's visit to that area had free access to that area.

JN: In the past those areas were more or less hermetically sealed and nobody could enter there without permits. Those permits were given according to the likes and dislikes of the officers in charge. Some statements and allegations have been made in the past which support the Honourable Member's suggestion. However, very recently a change in policy has been introduced allowing far greater freedom for people to go there and for people to come from there, which I think is a very healthy thing, so that there may be greater contact between the different areas.

Abdur Rahman Siddiqi asked whether there was no intention to bring these tribal areas within the boundaries and confines of the British Empire.

JN: That question does not arise at all. What the position of the tribal areas, internal and external, is going to be, as the House no doubt knows, is going to be considered by the Constituent Assembly or rather by the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly and that will ultimately depend on all manner of considerations and agreements between the parties concerned.

Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon asked what the urgency and motive were behind this tour taken by Nehru.

JN: This relates to another question. Within three or four days of our assuming charge, I heard that bombing operations were going on in Waziristan and all of us, of course, were perturbed by this. Fortunately these operations could be stopped very soon. In fact, they stopped within 48 hours of this knowledge and were finally over within three or four days. Now, this matter brought the question of the whole Frontier policy before us and in discussing it with our officers in our department, it was suggested to me by our senior officers that it would be a good thing for me to visit the Frontier, and to meet the officers of the department including the Chief Officer there who is the Governor also and some representatives of the tribal people and I cordially agreed with this suggestion of my department. Later I suggested that some dates might be fixed up. There was no hurry about it. As a matter of fact, it took about two or three weeks for this question to develop and to be discussed. When the final dates were fixed up, it was probably about 10 days before I went. Actually it was more than 10 days. Then the detailed programme came after.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan asked whether the impression prevalent abroad that the Government of India finally proposed the annexation of the tribal areas to India was true.

JN: No, Sir. I am not aware at all of that. I do not think there is any truth in it. I have not heard any suggestion to that effect before from any responsible quarter at least.

Govind Malaviya asked whether the Government would take steps to undo the mischief being done by parties outside and elsewhere by that suggestion.

JN: It is difficult to catch hold of such mischief but one of the purposes of my visit was to remove any such misapprehensions from any person's mind.

Ahmed E.H. Jaffer asked whether Nehru was successful in this.

JN: I think I was partly, if not largely, successful.

25. Forward Policy and the Frontier Tribes[1]

S.K.D. Paliwal: Do the Government intend to give up the forward policy in regard to the Frontier tribes ?

Jawaharlal Nehru: There is an old argument between advocates of a "forward" policy and those of a "close-border" policy on the North-West Frontier. The present policy has been a compromise between the two; it is now under close and careful consideration.

S.K.D. Paliwal: Do the Government intend to end the feud with the Fakir of Ipi and establish friendly relations with him?

JN: Government have no desire to carry on a feud with anybody and would welcome friendly relations with the Fakir of Ipi.

1. 1 November 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VII, 1946, 28 October 1946 - 11 November 1946, pp. 378-379. Nehru's interventions are given in full, and the rest of the proceedings summarised.

Sri Prakasa: Is it a fact that the Fakir of Ipi has written to the Honourable Member asking for an interview or expressing a desire to carry on negotiations?

JN: Well, Sir, I have received a number of letters, some purporting to come from the friends of the Fakir of Ipi and some possibly from the Fakir of Ipi himself. It is a little difficult to be quite certain whether they have come from the Fakir himself or from others. In the course of these letters much has been said to the effect that they would like to have contacts and relations.

N.G. Ranga asked whether Nehru had seen *The Hindustan Times* news that the Fakir of Ipi told Abdul Ghaffar Khan that he was prevented from seeing Nehru during his Frontier visit by Political Agents.

JN: I have not seen this particular item of news in the paper and so I cannot say anything about it.

Seth Govind Das: Did the Honourable Member have any political talks with the political servants of the Frontier when he was on tour with respect to the Fakir of Ipi?

JN: I had no opportunity, but the Fakir of Ipi's name came in the course of talks certainly.

Muhammad Nauman: The Honourable Member has said that possibly the letter came from the Fakir of Ipi. What are the presumptions in saying this? What does the Honourable Member mean by saying that it was possibly from the Fakir of Ipi?

JN: There is no presumption. I said that a letter came to me the signature on which it was rather difficult to decipher and I was not quite sure myself. That is why I said that it might be from him.

Sri Prakasa: What is the nature of the replies, if any, which the Honourable Member has sent to these letters?

JN: I have sent no reply to any recent communication I have received. One, I think, reached me when I was in the Frontier and one subsequent to my return. To either of these I have sent no reply in writing. Orally, I mentioned to those people who said they were the friends of the Fakir of Ipi that we will be able to contact with him and to resume friendly relations.

26. To Olaf Caroe[1]

New Delhi
16 November 1946

Dear Sir Olaf,
I must apologise to you for the delay in replying to your letter of November 7th.[2] Ever since my return from Bihar, I have been overwhelmed with work and I have been making frantic attempts to catch up to it. I did not wish to write to you till I had seen all the relevant papers, which you were good enough to send, and had given thought to the matter. Even now I do not propose to write about the larger implications of Frontier policy.

2. In the long note I sent you I had given some of my impressions about the Frontier policy, but I had stated that these were impressions only and I was not prepared then to say anything more definite. I propose to adhere to that resolution although inevitably I have been thinking a great deal about Frontier in spite of my other pre-occupations. I feel that just at the present moment there are so many disturbing and complicating features that it would not be right to consider any basic changes in the Frontier. For my part I do feel that basic changes will be necessary some time or other, and probably sooner rather than later. But, as I have said, this is not the time to raise this question when not only the Frontier but a good part of India are in a state of turmoil and extreme tension.

3. The report sent by the Chief Secretary to the Local Administration, North-West Frontier,[3] gives the background of my visit to the Frontier. It is obvious that, apart from local causes mentioned in the report, the Frontier was affected by events and forces in the rest of India. I believe that this whole unfortunate situation in India has been mismanaged with the result that definite encouragement has been given, even though it might not have been intended, to forces of evil and violence. The result of this has been what we see. A certain premium has been put on violent activities and attacks for political purposes. Even if this had not been done, there would have been tension and trouble, but it would probably have been on a much smaller scale and easily dealt with. For various reasons, which are perhaps inherent in the existing situation, an impression was created all over

1. R/3/1/92, I.O.L.R., London.
2. In his letter of 7 November, Caroe had cautioned against stirring up the tribes which would lead to their "vertical or even a horizontal alignment with the Indian political parties", and said if Pathan nationalism could be aligned with India as a whole "much will have been done to produce a stable equilibrium on a vital frontier."
3. Dudley Gordon Heriot de la Fargue; Home Secretary to Government, N.W.F.P., Peshawar, 1938; Political Agent, Kurram, 1944; Chief Secretary to Government, N.W.F.P., Peshawar, 1944-47.

India that methods of violence for a particular purpose will be leniently dealt with. This common impression, I take it, existed in the Frontier as elsewhere.

4. If we have to understand the real background of events, we must take into consideration the conflicts that exist in India. The communal conflict is obvious enough and nothing need be said about it. But there is also an inherent conflict between those who represent the system, political and social, which has existed in India till now, and those who represent something now which is gradually taking shape. This conflict must be separated from the merits and *bona fides* of individuals concerned. Any group of persons contains good men and bad, able men and mediocrities. The question is not so much of ability and *bona fides* as of the climate of opinion and belief as well as the pattern of behaviour to which the group is accustomed.

5. The higher services in India have functioned in a special kind of environment for some generations. This environment has led to authoritarian methods of government and a great deal of complacency and belief in one's own rectitude. This belief inevitably leads to dislike and condemnation of any person who challenges it or comes in the way. There is something almost, if I may say so, religious about it in the sense that the maintenance of the group and its methods of functioning become an article of faith.

6. During the past many years, these higher services have come into direct conflict with the nationalist movement in India, notably the Congress. This conflict has led to a very great deal of suspicion of each other, both as between groups and individuals. Only a very few people can get over this suspicion. There is in addition the powerful impetus of a vested interest to be protected. When the actual conflict ceases and externally cooperation takes its place, there cannot be easily a sudden sea-change in the minds and behaviour of the parties concerned. Not only do they suspect each other's *bona fides*, but they also look in different directions and have different objectives. The senior officials belonging to the permanent services resent being ordered about by persons whom they had been putting in prison till recently and whom they consider as trouble-makers. They realise, of course, that a change must take place and is taking place, and they try to adapt themselves to it. In all honesty they endeavour to fit in with the new scheme of things, but the inner conflicts remain and colour their outlook and their activities. In some cases the conflict is obvious enough.

7. In spite of constitutional changes and popular government in the provinces, the Civil Service considers itself as something apart from that government though it serves it in a large measure. It looks to the Governor, to the

Viceroy, or to the Secretary of State, for protection, direction and leadership. It may carry out the instructions issued by a Provincial Government, but its allegiance lies elsewhere. This mere fact creates the wrong psychological atmosphere.

8. To say that the Civil Service should remain apart from politics is a perfectly correct statement. But to think or say that it is above politics, something superior which looks down upon a warring political scene, is wrong. It is easy to imagine the difference between the position today and what it would be if the services did not have a Governor or Viceroy or Secretary of State to look up to. They should even then be kept apart from politics as far as possible and it would be the function of the Government of the day to give them protection as well as direction. Today there is a hiatus which makes the position both of the Government and the services a difficult and uncomfortable one. Added to this is the fact that these services have been in continuous conflict with the nationalist movement and they cannot forget recent events, nor can the other party. There is no such conflict between the services and the Muslim League and its supporters. Without liking the Muslim League at all or its policies, they inevitably incline towards it as the safer group which should be encouraged. This Muslim League group fades off into what might be called the old loyalist group which naturally has found favour in the eyes of the old services.

9. Hence it normally happens that where there is a Congress Provincial Government, there is far greater psychological and other conflicts with the services than in a province where there is a Muslim League Government. The Congress represents a much more powerful urge for political and social change and is, therefore, disliked. Almost everywhere in India it has been obvious that Governors and others favour the Muslim League as against the Congress. Some of them do it inadvertently and almost unconsciously; others do it deliberately and obviously and sometimes even twist the law to this end.

10. Perhaps if the true nature of the changes that are coming over India had been fully realised, a different attitude might have been adopted. But such understanding comes seldom, and all of us function much more in the grip of impersonal forces and subconscious desires. I remember mentioning to you, in the course of our talk, that the British Government, as represented in India, had continually backed the wrong horse. Occasionally circumstances had forced them to act in a different way, but their whole tendency was to revert to the old position. The result of this has been turmoil and conflict, for the wrong horse cannot, in the nature of things, win. It represents something that has been but not something that is going to be.

11. It is stated in the report of the Chief Secretary that it is essential that officers right down the scale should feel that they have the confidence of the higher authorities and should be publicly supported in meeting their heavy responsibilities. Of course officers should be supported. But they can only be rightly supported if an officer who errs is brought to book. Otherwise all of them are to some extent tainted. There is far too great a tendency to protect the wrong-doer for fear that the right-doer may lose prestige. This has resulted in the right-doer also losing prestige. But apart from this, the big question which I have referred to above remains. Officers who consider themselves superior to the authorities they serve can hardly expect public appreciation or support. There is too much of the old atmosphere surrounding them.

12. Reference has been made in the Chief Secretary's report of the propaganda which has sought to saddle Political Officers of the North-West Frontier with the responsibility for the hostility with which my party was met. Much of this propaganda, I think, is misplaced and exaggerated. Yet there is no doubt that it represents a belief based on past experience. Also there is no doubt that apart from the particular circumstances in this case, there is a basic hostility.

13. Many months ago, long before the Interim Government was formed, when it was privately suggested that I should become Member for External Affairs, which included tribal areas, I was told that this would be unwelcome to the tribal people. Hardly anybody even in the innermost circles of Government knew about this proposal, and it was obvious that the tribal people could not possibly have heard of it. Nevertheless I was told that the tribal people disliked it greatly and that there might be trouble. It seemed obvious to me that the objection, at that time at least, did not come from the tribal people who knew nothing about it, but from certain officers of Government who disapproved of the idea. Much later I heard of some meetings or jirgas of the tribal people who had expressed their disapproval also. At that time too no public announcement of my appointment had been made. It was curious that the tribal people should agitate themselves about a fact which was not publicly known and indeed which had not been finally decided upon. The inference was obvious that a broad hint had been given to them and they reacted to it. Of course they only reacted to it because the background was favourable for it.

14. I do not personally saddle Political Officers in the Frontier with responsibility for much that happened. But I do think it is legitimate for me to suggest that their basic approach to my appointment and my visit was such as to add to that hostility.

15. It would be absurd for me, or for anyone else, to condemn a group. I am not doing so. I am merely trying to understand the psychological background of the group, and this inevitably influences their actions as well as their beliefs. As a matter of fact I was considerably impressed by the ability and earnestness of some of the senior officers I met in the Frontier. I have no doubt of their *bona fides*. But this does not help me to get over my initial difficulty about the hiatus between their outlook and possibly my outlook. Some officers I met did not impress me, and a few produced a definitely bad impression. But it would be unfair of me to judge anyone by first impressions. As a whole I should say they were at least as good as any similar group of officers in any other part of India.

16. Also I have no doubt that these officers in the Frontier, who have specialized in their work there, know the people of the Frontier and their customs and ways of living far better than I do. Because of their knowledge and experience, their advice is valuable. But there is such a thing as losing sight of the wood for the trees and a distant observer might see much that escapes the habitual resident who gets used to his environment. It is an interesting fact to be noted that people exactly similar to the Frontier tribes have been dealt with more successfully elsewhere. We can learn much from other experiments provided we are not too much wrapped up in our own ideas and conceits.

17. You will forgive me for this long disquisition. But I want you to know what I have in my mind and how I look at these various happenings. That might help you to understand my approach to some extent even though you might not agree with it.

18. As regards the violent attacks made on me and my party, I do not wish to say anything more at present, and I leave it to you to take such action as you may think proper. I would suggest, however, that in this matter it is desirable for Dr. Khan Sahib to be consulted, both because he and his brother were personally involved and feel strongly about the matter, and also in his capacity as Prime Minister of the Provincial Government.

19. In regard to Shaikh Mahbub Ali, however, I should like to say something.[4] I have carefully considered his statement and the other statements about him. I have received many complaints about him and certain reports about his having encouraged people to misbehave towards us. I have also learnt, and you yourself mentioned this fact, that his case is being considered

4. In view of the gravity of the charges against Mahbub Ali Caroe had suggested a formal and full-dress enquiry against him.

by the anti-corruption officer. His past record is not an inspiring one. But I do not think it right of me to allow such reports to influence my judgment in regard to the particular matter before us. I cannot say without far more proof that he was privy to the assault that was made upon me. But of one thing I am quite clear. His behaviour at the time was disgraceful. His car was only a few feet from my car when we came out of the gate. There was one small car intervening and all three were bunched up together. As soon as we came out, we saw a small crowd and a bus-load of people with black flags shouting slogans and obviously threatening us. The moment I saw them I had no doubt that they were going to create a lot of trouble. Mahbub Ali's car just passed the bus when we were held up by the bus itself. Immediately, of course, the distance between his car and our car increased rapidly as he was moving away and we were at a standstill. It is possible that he did not actually see the various assaults upon us because he was rapidly going forward and we were surrounded by this little crowd. For him to go forward then and not even to look back is inexplicable. I shall not go further into this matter except to say that I have no doubt in my mind that he could not be ignorant of what was happening to us, even though he did not see much of it.

20. I feel rather reluctant to pursue this matter as I am personally involved. I would much rather that nothing further was done so far as I am concerned, but there is a public aspect of it which cannot be ignored. It is for this reason that I wrote to you previously about him. What steps you should take against him, it is for you to determine. I am not anxious to punish him or anyone else. But in view of what has happened, he is unfit for a responsible position. Whatever rules may be applied to men in the services, they should be followed. I should have thought, however, that in a case like this the first thing to be done was to suspend him. I know of many cases where, for far more trivial offences, swift action was taken.

21. I shall certainly look into the Frontier Five Year Development Plan which includes the tribal areas. As you know perhaps, I am very much interested in planning and I am anxious that the time should come when we can all devote ourselves to planning on a large scale all over India.

22. Please forgive me for this long letter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

27. Further Comments on Tour[1]

I appreciate the note dated 6th November which Mr. Weightman has written in criticism of my note of the 24th October.[2] I desire from my colleagues frankness and, where necessary, criticism. It is immaterial whether one agrees or not with a particular point of view. But it is very material that those who have to work together should understand one another.

2. I have read Mr. Weightman's note with care and with profit. Obviously he knows much more about the Frontier and its conditions than I do and his knowledge helps me to understand those conditions. It is true that probably our basic approach is not the same and hence we may emphasise different aspects of a certain question, or draw varying inferences from the same facts.

3. I have today written a long letter to Sir Olaf Caroe in which I have tried to explore the background of our respective minds.[3] That is a difficult task, of course, and I do not know if I have at all succeeded. But it may be that what I have said helps a little in understanding each other. I do not propose to repeat what I have said there or to add much to it at this stage. I shall say this, however, that I do not wholly understand references to a non-party approach to the problems of the Frontier.[4] In a sense, of course, as I have said before, it should be a non-party approach because the problems have really nothing to do with party alignments and, in any event, it is desirable to avoid the party approach in such matters. Any Government, however much it may represent a party, must take a broader view and seek to represent, as far as it can, the people generally and not merely a particular

1. 17 November 1946. R/3/1/92, I.O.L.R., London.
2. Weightman disagreed with most of Nehru's views particularly those set out in paragraph 6 of his note, and defended the existing Frontier policy in view of the anarchic nature and the traditional organization of the Pathan tribes. He strongly denied that there had been any official resistance to Nehru's tour of the Frontier.
3. See the preceding item.
4. Weightman had noted, "Sir Olaf Caroe and all of us have at all times stressed the overriding necessity of a non-party approach to the problems of the Frontier and H.M. (Nehru) himself has endorsed that view; yet H.M. on his tour was accompanied by the leader of the Congress Party in the Frontier and by the Premier of the Congress Government of the province."

party. What I do not understand is the suggestion that a non-party approach means that every problem should be considered by a mixed crowd representing various viewpoints. Even more so it is difficult for me to understand why, in order to ensure this non-party approach, I must keep aloof from my own colleagues simply because some people do not approve of them. This business has nothing to do with a party or a non-party approach; it would just mean giving in to threats. No Government can function in this way.

4. As I have said in my letter to Sir Olaf Caroe, I do not propose to consider at this stage the basic problems of the Frontier. We shall have to wait a little for a more suitable atmosphere to do that. Perhaps the best way would be to wait for the Constituent Assembly and the Advisory Committee. It may be desirable to explore these problems a little further even before the Constituent Assembly. But in any event we need not raise that issue at present.

5. About the various incidents that happened during my visit to the Frontier, I am not satisfied with all the explanations given. I am not prepared to accuse any officers (excepting one), and I have no desire that any particular individuals should be held responsible for any incident. It does seem to me, however, that there was something lacking. Whether this was due to the basic causes, which I have mentioned in my letter to Sir Olaf Caroe, or to something else, I do not know. I have left this matter in the hands of Sir Olaf Caroe and suggested to him that he might consult Dr. Khan Sahib, the Prime Minister of N.W.F.P.

6. One incident which is difficult to ignore is the Malakand incident and Shaikh Mahbub Ali's conduct in relation to it. I want to be fair to Mahbub Ali and, therefore, I am not prepared to say, on the evidence before me, that he had been privy to the attack. Further inquiry may enlighten us. But of his conduct during the incident I have no doubt whatever, and I consider it thoroughly discreditable.

7. In the note of Mr. Weightman dated 11th November it is pointed out that there are two methods of making an enquiry into the conduct of public servants. For my part I am not anxious for a long-drawn-out public inquiry which would undoubtedly create bad blood and tension. Probably the departmental inquiry suggested would be enough. This is for Sir Olaf Caroe to decide.

8. As for the "general charges that have been levelled against the officers of the Indian Political Service", I do not know if reference was made to

what I have said or to what others have said.[5] I do not think I have made any such general charge, and indeed I think it wrong to make any such charge. Probably reference was made to other people's remarks. I cannot go out of my way to contradict what other people have said. I regret that any general charge should be made because this loses substance by joining together the good and the bad. As I have stated in my letter to Sir Olaf Caroe, I met many officers of the Indian Political Service who impressed me considerably. I cannot obviously say the same thing about everybody and I suppose it is quite possible that in the Frontier, as elsewhere, there is graft and corruption. Probably conditions in the Frontier make this somewhat easier than elsewhere.

9. It is unfortunate that when we are overwhelmed with work and have to consider important questions of policy, we should have to give so much time and energy to certain incidents and individual cases. The importance of these ultimately lies in the light they throw on the existing state of affairs.

5. Weightman had written: "I am much afraid that hostility towards Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan may have been engendered now as the result of his extravagant accusations against officers of the Indian Political Service. Officers who have taken pride in their Service and in the tradition of their Service....have been accused of deliberately attempting to sabotage H.M.'s visit and of graft and common corruption." He also made a plea for their early vindication.

28. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
18th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I am enclosing a copy of a letter I have sent to Sir Olaf Caroe,[2] Governor of the North-West Frontier Province. As you have been visiting this Province and might have discussed some matters relating to the incidents during my visit there, I thought this would be of interest to you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. R/3/1/92, I.O.L.R., London.
2. See *ante*, item 26.

29. The Ban on Khudai Khidmadgar Volunteers[1]

During the last few days reports have appeared in the press about the banning of Khudai Khidmadgar volunteers from entering into the Khyber Agency and Waziristan.[2] These volunteers are said to have been members of a goodwill mission to these tribal areas and the ban on them has created some resentment. During the past few months a great deal of virulent communal propaganda has been going on without let or hindrance in some of these areas. Objection has been taken to the fact that while this was permitted, others bent on peaceful missions were not allowed to enter these areas. When I was in the Frontier Province I was told that these restrictions have been removed and people from the Frontier Province could go into tribal areas. It now appears that the restrictions have been reimposed. I should have imagined that these Khudai Khidmadgars would help in easing the situation and in any event their visit would not lead to any trouble. To prevent them from going raises people's suspicions about Government's policy and charges of partiality are made. I realise that the situation in the Frontier is a difficult one and every care has to be taken. But a difficult situation is not ultimately met by wrong tendencies being allowed to flourish unchecked and right tendencies being checked. There has been a great deal of one-sided propaganda in the past which has partly led to the present unfortunate situation. Reports in the press have shown how mischievous this propaganda has been and how it has indulged in patently false statements. When an eruption occurs this has to be met by force, but it seems very necessary that the basic causes should be tackled and the widespread misconceptions prevailing in the Frontier should be removed. It is also obviously necessary that nothing should be done which leads people to doubt the impartiality of the administration. I suggest, therefore, that you should draw the attention of the Agent of the Governor-General[3] in the Frontier to this fact and urge him to give free access to the Khudai Khidmadgar volunteers to the tribal areas as had been promised previously. In this matter he can consult Dr. Khan Sahib, the Premier of the N.W.F.P., if this is considered necessary.

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 14 December 1946. J.N. Collection.
2. According to a press report Amin Jan Khan, *Salar-i-Azam* of the Khudai Khidmadgars, had sent the following telegram to Abdul Ghaffar Khan at Delhi on 12 December 1946: "Congress deputation proceeding to Malagon, Khyber Agency, yesterday was prevented from entering the area by Political Department and has come back. Awaiting instructions."
3. Olaf Caroe.

30. The Malakand Incident[1]

In the last note which Sir Olaf Caroe wrote about the incidents connected with my visit to the Frontier Province he suggested that a departmental inquiry presided over by a High Court Judge or an ex-High Court Judge might be held in regard to the Malakand incident.[2] It was not made clear in the note whether the Political Agent[3] of Malakand had been suspended or not pending such an inquiry. In one of my earlier letters to Sir Olaf Caroe I had suggested that in any event the first step to be taken should be the suspension of the Political Agent pending further inquiry and action.[4] I should like to know whether this was done or not. It seems to me that when a serious incident of this type occurs, when the personal integrity of the officer in question is deeply involved and serious charges are made against him, his suspension is essential. I had written especially about this incident because of my personal knowledge of it. About other incidents I did not desire to say much as my knowledge was based on hearsay and information received from others.

2. Another important consideration to be borne in mind is the necessity for speed in dealing with any such matter. Obviously the value of any inquiry or subsequent action is greatly lessened if there is considerable delay.

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 14 December 1946. J.N. Collection.
2. On 21 October 1946 the car occupied by Nehru, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Saheb was blocked on a narrow mountain road near Malakand by a lorry full of demonstrators while the car of the Political Agent was allowed to pass. The demonstrators also threw stones at Nehru's car with the result that all the three occupants were slightly injured.
3. Nawab Mahbub Ali.
4. See *ante*, item 23.

31. To Mehr Chand Khanna[1]

New Delhi
13th January 1947

My dear Mehr Chand,
I have just learnt that the tribal people in Hazara have submitted to our

1. File No. 201-PS/46-PMS.

terms[2] and, therefore, it is not necessary for any further action to be taken against them. This is good. But news from the settled areas of the province in Hazara continues to be bad.[3] I am sure your Government is doing everything possible. I am rather worried about the fate of the refugees, more especially those who have gone over to Kashmir and near Muzaffarabad. Apparently no one looks after them there. Sardar Patel told me yesterday that he could arrange to have some money sent for relief work for these refugees, who are, I understand, principally Sikhs. I suggested to him that the money might be sent to you and you could make proper arrangements for their relief. I hope you will be able to do this.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. A fine in cash and rifles and surrender of hostages as an earnest of good behaviour was enforced on the Nandihar tribes for their crimes in Hazara district in December 1946.
3. Houses of non-Muslims in several villages in Hazara district were raided in the first fortnight of January, resulting in arson, loot and murder, and rendering of thousands of people homeless.

32. Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Owing to false and exaggerated propaganda about Bihar several serious incidents took place in Hazara district involving attacks on Hindus Sikhs arson and loot. Number of persons killed not considerable. Large numbers refugees. Frontier Government has taken strong action against miscreants also helping refugees. Situation now quiet. We are keeping in close touch and will take all necessary steps.

Jawaharlal
Vallabhbhai

1. 16 January 1947. A.I.C.C. File No. G-14/1946-47, p. 147, N.M.M.L.

6

THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

1. Telegram to Hubert Rance[1]

New Delhi
5 September 1946

In course of our personal conversations in New Delhi I mentioned to you trials proceeding in Burma against Indians for alleged extortions.[2] In view of general policy adopted by Government of India as well as Malayan administration[3] approved by His Majesty's Government not to proceed with all such cases would earnestly request you also to have cases in Burma withdrawn.[4] Understand Burmese opinion favours this course.

1. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 24/46/O.S.II, p. 154/corr., National Archives of India.
   Major-General Sir Hubert Rance (1898-1974); Governor of Burma, 1946-48; later Governor and C.-in-C. of Trinidad and Tobago, 1950-55.
2. On private complaints five prominent Indians in Burma, who were members of the Netaji Fund Committee, were prosecuted on charges of extortion. Another Indian, who was an official of the Azad Hind Government, was facing similar charges. It was reported that the Government of Burma were helping the prosecution.
3. In India I.N.A. prosecutions had been withdrawn and in Malaya cases of similar nature had been withdrawn or sentences remitted.
4. The Governor of Burma informed Nehru on 19 September 1946 that he had passed orders for withdrawal of these cases.

2. Telegram to Hubert Rance[1]

I am grateful to you for action taken by Government of Burma in withdrawing cases against Indians.

1. Home (Political) File No. 1/38/46—Poll.(I), p. 26, National Archives of India. The source bears no date.

OUTSIDE INDIA HOUSE, LONDON, DECEMBER 1946

3. Message to the I.N.A. Peace Committee[1]

Every attempt to lessen communal disharmony and conflict is to be welcomed both because this is desirable in itself and because we can only build up the structure of a free and democratic India on the basis of cooperation and goodwill. In present circumstances, this is even more to be welcomed. So I am glad that the I.N.A. officers and men have decided to devote themselves especially to this vital task.

They are in many ways particularly suited for this, as in the past they have set an example of harmonious living and working together for a common cause—the freedom and independence of India. I welcome, therefore, the formation of the I.N.A. Peace Committee and wish it success. I hope it will receive every cooperation from all concerned.

1. Printed in *The Free Press Journal*, 25 September 1946. It was decided at the I.N.A. Advisory Committee meeting held at New Delhi on 10 and 11 September 1946, to form an I.N.A. Peace Committee to explore the possibilities of a communal settlement. The Peace Committee,consisting of seven prominent leaders of the I.N.A., later drew up a plan for a nationwide drive against communal riots and bloodshed. The plan included the setting up of anti-bloodshed committees throughout India under the auspices of the I.N.A.

4. The Image of the I.N.A.[1]

When we were in Ahmednagar Prison, we had heard vaguely about the formation of an Indian National Army in Malaya. We knew very little about it. Indeed very few people in India knew much about it at the time. Soon after our release from prison in June 1945, I had some further news and particulars about the formation of this Army. I was naturally interested, but the Japanese war was going on then and I did not think it proper to say anything in public about what I had heard. Soon after the Japanese war ended and I thought the time had come to make public reference to this Army.

1. New Delhi, 10 October 1946. This foreword was written to *My Memories of I.N.A. & Its Netaji* by Shah Nawaz Khan (Delhi, 1946).

OUTSIDE INDIA HOUSE, LONDON, DECEMBER 1946

ON THE FRONTIER, OCTOBER 1946

My knowledge even then was limited and I was not quite sure in my mind as to how far the formation and activities of this Army had been justified, keeping in view the wider scheme of things and the implications of the world war. But I had no doubt in my mind even then of two facts—that the men and women, who had enrolled themselves in this Army and worked under Shri Subhas Chandra Bose's guidance, had done so because of their passionate desire to serve the cause of India's freedom; also that if, owing to some technical interpretation of military law, large numbers of them received severe sentences, it would be a tragedy for India. It would be a tragedy not only because that might involve the death or long incarceration of brave and vital sons and daughters of India, but also because that would leave a deep wound in the body of India which would take very long to heal. That would mean also an intensification of the ill-will against England which was great already. It might well be an inseparable barrier between the two countries.

So, quite apart from the political background, I was convinced that everything should be done to save these young men and women. I had judged rightly, for immediately there was an amazing reaction in the whole of India and even the remote villages suddenly knew about the I.N.A. and wanted to do something which might help in effecting the release of the men being tried or imprisoned. Those men, whatever they were as individuals, became symbols of India's struggle for freedom and because of this the people of India, with an amazing unanimity, stood by those symbols and sought to protect them. A wave of excitement passed through the land and every other question, more vital in its larger significance, became secondary for the moment. The trial of some of these men conducted with great ability by Shri Bhulabhai Desai held the stage in India and Shri Bhulabhai's final address[2] became a classic.

Public memory is notoriously short and in any event the public mind could not function at that pitch for long. Nevertheless the I.N.A. made history not only in Malaya and Burma and elsewhere but also in people's minds all over India, and that fact will endure. When the passions of the day have cooled down a very objective estimate of the I.N.A. and its leaders and the work it did will be made. Many books have already come out on this subject reflecting the excitement of the moment. Perhaps it is too early to survey the work of the I.N.A. dispassionately. Opinions will differ about

2. Presenting the defence arguments on 17 and 18 December 1945 before the General Court Martial trying three I.N.A. officers, Bhulabhai Desai called for the status of belligerency to be accorded to the I.N.A., whose members "fought as a part of an organised army for the liberation of their country." He contended that the trial was illegal since the accused could not be tried under domestic law. He claimed that the officers held were entitled to be treated as prisoners of war and set free with the cessation of hostilities.

the political aspects of much that was done. But, however that may be, it is desirable to know the facts at least. My friend and colleague, Major General Shah Nawaz Khan of the I.N.A., has presented these facts in sober fashion, and has thus provided an important record of an important undertaking.

I must confess that I have not been able, through lack of time, to read through this record, but I have read parts of it and it seems to me that this account is far the best we have at present. I commend it, therefore, to others and I hope that a reading of it will bring enlightenment about many aspects of this brave adventure. *Jai Hind.*

5. To the Secretary, Reception Committee, Indian National Congress[1]

New Delhi
15 October 1946

Dear Friend,

It was announced in the press that your committee have decided to issue tickets for the Congress session at a concessional rate to I.N.A. men and those Congressmen who went to jail in 1942. The Commander-in-Chief drew my attention to this and suggested that there should be no discrimination in regard to this matter between I.N.A. men and other ex-servicemen. I told him that there was no wish to discriminate and that I would gladly recommend to the Reception Committee to issue concessional tickets for the open sessions to regular ex-service men, if he so desired. He has expressed that wish. I suggest, therefore, that you might issue concessional tickets to these regular ex-service men also. The army has been too long isolated from the civilian population and every opportunity must be given to it to come in line with civilian activities.

This, of course, would not apply to serving members of the armed forces.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 371-PS/46-PMS.

6. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

New Delhi
16 November 1946

My dear Vallabhbhai,
I have received repeated complaints from the Punjab in regard to the Provincial Government's policy there about the employment of I.N.A. personnel. This is, of course, a provincial matter entirely for the Government there to decide. But I understand that the Prime Minister of the Punjab has repeatedly stated that he is really carrying out the Government of India's policy as contained in various circulars sent to him. I enclose copies of two of these circulars. You will notice that they are old circulars issued previous to the formation of the Interim Government.

I understand that subsequently it was made clear to Provincial Governments that there should be no bar at all to the employment of I.N.A. personnel, except in so far as the army or the police services were concerned. Some of the Provincial Governments have actually employed them in various civil departments. May I request you to make this clear to the Punjab Government, as they seem to be in some doubt about the position?[2]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-1950*, Vol. 3, pp. 203-204.
2. Vallabhbhai Patel informed Nehru that these were circulars issued by the Defence Department. So far as the Home Department was concerned there was no ban on the re-employment of ex-I.N.A. personnel.

7. To Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

New Delhi
25 November 1946

My dear Vallabhbhai,
I inquired into the I.N.A. matter in Meerut. Considerable money has been spent upon them in providing blankets to a number and for other purposes.

1. J.N. Collection.

But the figure you mentioned, I think, covers all the volunteers. There were over 3,000 volunteers of which less than one-third were I.N.A. men. Food was one of the major items of expenditure. I found that the Reception Committee had given a contract for feeding the civil volunteers at Rs. 2-4-0- per head per day. The I.N.A. people made their own arrangements and cost the Reception Committee 0-15-6 per head per day. This went up by a few annas later. There was thus a marked saving in expenditure on them for food. On the whole I think they did good work and were not very expensive. The chief expense was in providing them with clothing etc. They should prove good workers in the future and it would be desirable to help them a little from the I.N.A. funds. They are unemployed and have nothing to fall back upon. Most of them are leaving Meerut tomorrow and if any payment has to be made to them, it must be done tomorrow. I gathered from your talk that you were agreeable to doing this and so I have asked Choudhry Raghubir Narain Singh, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, to arrange for this payment through Shah Nawaz. He will advance him up to Rs. 30,000. Could you kindly send a cheque for Rs. 30,000 to Choudhry Raghubir Narain Singh soon?

I have asked Shah Nawaz to examine the I.N.A. and other volunteers' accounts for the Congress.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. To Baldev Singh[1]

New Delhi
25th December 1946

My dear Baldev Singhji,

There are many matters which I should like to discuss with you, but both you and I have been terribly busy. I am going away day after tomorrow to see Gandhiji. I shall return probably on the 31st morning. The first week of January is an exceedingly busy one for me. I shall be presiding over the Science Congress throughout the week. On the 4th and 5th, and possibly, the 6th, we have meetings of the Congress Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. On the 2nd January Aung San is arriving here on his way to London.

1. File No. 371-PS/46-PMS.

I suppose, therefore, that the real talk with you will have to be postponed a little, though I hope to meet you anyhow early in January. I want you to meet Aung San when he is here. I shall fix that up later. We may have a preliminary talk with him at this stage and on his return from England we may have another talk.

I am writing to you more especially about the I.N.A. men still in prison.[2] I know that the Commander-in-Chief feels rather strongly about this matter, but I should like you and him to consider the broader aspects of this question. Indeed, I should have liked to discuss this with him and, perhaps, we might be able to fix up a meeting some time later for this purpose.

Quite apart from the merits of each individual involved, and I understand there are only a very few persons in prison now, we have to consider the consequences of either keeping them in prison or of discharging them. You will remember that the matter came up by a resolution before the Central Legislative Assembly.[3] Both the Congress members and the Muslim League members, as well as others, would, normally speaking, have unanimously passed the resolution asking for their release. It was only because of the Commander-in-Chief's wishes in the matter that we got the resolution postponed.[4] Naturally, in any such matter we have to give full weight to what the Commander-in-Chief feels and we do not want to go against any decision of his. He represents the army and army discipline has to be maintained. On the other hand, it is exceedingly difficult for us to ignore a very widespread public sentiment. The result of ignoring it is bound to lead to public agitation and possibly some trouble.

The adjourned resolution will come up right at the beginning of the next Central Assembly session[5] and our policy in regard to it should be clearly defined beforehand. You must have seen reports of a growing agitation in the Punjab among I.N.A. men demanding the release of the persons in

2. According to the list prepared by the I.N.A. Headquarters, there were 35,000 I.N.A. officials all over India still in detention.
3. The Central Legislative Assembly had discussed on 4 February 1946 a resolution moved by Govind Malaviya recommending, because "of the universal expression of public opinion throughout the country", that the Government give up the trials of the officers of the Indian National Army and release immediately all men and officers of the Indian National Army as well as all other political prisoners under detention or imprisonment.
4. Wavell and Auchinleck held the view that any concession to the I.N.A. men or even the release of those in prison would make it impossible for the Commander-in-Chief or any senior officer of the British army to remain responsible for the discipline of the Indian army.
5. On 8 November 1946, further discussion on the resolution was postponed as the mover of the resolution was absent. The resolution was moved again on 18 February 1947 by Abdul Ghani Khan.

jail.[6] I have tried my utmost to prevent any such agitation developing, but I do not know if I shall succeed. Once any such things happen, public attention will be drawn to it all over the country and it will be quite impossible for the Central Assembly to ignore this. The consequences will be bad both for the Army and the public.

I would earnestly request you, therefore, to place these considerations before the Commander-in-Chief. The I.N.A. people in prison have been there now for over a year and from any point of view there would be nothing abnormal about their discharge. I understand that some kind of review takes place of these cases periodically, and that January is the time fixed for such a rev'ew. If, as a result of this review, the Commander-in-Chief himself decides to release them, this would be in the fitness of things and would be greatly appreciated by all concerned. It is far better that the initiative for this came from the Commander-in-Chief and that we are not hustled by public agitation in the matter.

We have so many big problems to face that our natural desire is not to allow relatively minor matters to come in our way and produce new conflicts in the public mind. If we delay a decision in the early stages, the issue will force itself upon us somewhat later. We shall not be able to ignore it, or to postpone it then. Therefore, it is highly desirable that some clear decision should be arrived at in the course of the next two or, at most, three weeks.

As I have suggested above, I shall gladly meet the Commander-in-Chief to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. There was an increasing agitation for the release of a number of I.N.A. men serving varying prison sentences for "atrocious and cruel acts" or desertion and waging war against the King.

9. To Radhakrishna Biswasroy[1]

New Delhi
26 December 1946

Dear Mr. Biswasroy,[2]

I have your letter of the 22nd December. It has been stated clearly that if

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Parliamentary secretary in the first Congress ministry in Orissa, 1937-39; arrested, 1940. He was later elected M.L.A. and was Minister for P.W.D. and Commerce in Orissa, 1947-48.

there are specific complaints of extraordinary misconduct, action should be taken. You must have proof of this. Normally the course to be adopted should be to call upon the official concerned for his explanation. If this is not satisfactory, he should be asked to resign from the service or further action may be taken.

Regarding the I.N.A., the Government of India have recently again made it clear that there should be no discrimination in regard to the I.N.A. in civil employment of any kind. In the U.P. many of them have been so employed, so also in Bombay. Undoubtedly you should try to help them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

10. To Baldev Singh[1]

New Delhi
16th January 1947

My dear Sardar Baldev Singh,

I am sending you the draft[2] as promised. I am also returning your draft note.[3]

As regards your suggestion that a distinction might be made between I.N.A. personnel and those persons who first joined the Japanese and then came over to the Allies and helped them against the Japanese, I do not know if it is easily possible to do so. Any individual outstanding case might, of course, be considered separately. People who came over to the Allies subsequently presumably require no help at all, as Government must have helped them.[4] I hope you will kindly expedite this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 371-PS/46-PMS.
2. See the succeeding item.
3. On the question of I.N.A. personnel.
4. Baldev Singh thought that no sympathy should be shown to such people "as they were not faithful even to the I.N.A."

11. Draft Note for the Cabinet on the I.N.A.[1]

During the last session of the Central Legislative Assembly a resolution demanding the release of I.N.A. prisoners who had been convicted came up for discussion. This resolution had been moved in the previous session and adjourned. Both the Congress and Muslim League parties in the Assembly were in favour of accepting the resolution, but the Commander-in-Chief made it clear at the time that he did not welcome it. A delicate situation was created. The Members of the Government would normally have accepted the wishes of the House in the matter, that is to say, would have accepted the resolution, but they felt that in such a matter nothing should be done to embarrass the Commander-in-Chief. It was so arranged, therefore, that further discussion of the resolution should be postponed till the next session. It will now come up before the Assembly on the first non-official day, that is, early in February. A connected matter is the question of payment of the forfeited balance of pay of the I.N.A. personnel. It is necessary to come to an early decision on these matters, not only because of the resolution, but also because of various other developments and possible eventualities in the country.

It is clear that the resolution has the support of both the Congress and the Muslim League and, therefore, there is no doubt that it will be passed almost unanimously. The Members of the Government cannot ignore this widespread feeling of the House which in this matter reflects the feeling in the country. Any other course would be a negation of democratic procedure and would be deeply resented both by the House and the country. In such an event there would be far-reaching repercussions and the many dangers, political and economic at present precariously balanced in the country, may find undesirable outlets. This whole question must be viewed in this wider perspective and in view of its importance should be considered by the Cabinet and a final decision given.

This decision will not merely be in regard to the attitude Government should take up about the resolution before the Assembly. If the decision is made that some action has to be taken, this can be done immediately after and even before the matter comes up before the Assembly. Indeed, for many reasons, it would be a wiser course to take action immediately.

The I.N.A. trials towards the end of 1945 aroused great public feeling and sympathy. It is well known that large numbers of officers and men in the Indian Army shared this sympathy. Whatever the merits of the case might be, the popular reaction was deep and widespread. This was perhaps natural

1. File No. 371-PS/46-PMS.

in the circumstances. The then Government of India, though they perhaps did not itself agree with this reaction, wisely decided to pay heed to it and most of the I.N.A. trials were dropped. Even those who were sentenced were released. For this prudent and far-seeing policy, the Commander-in-Chief was largely responsible. The result of this was that the excitement in the country rapidly subsided. That excitement was inevitably affecting the army also and so in the result a certain disturbing factor in the Indian Army was removed. The Government of the day solved a difficult and delicate problem by recognising that public opinion should not be ignored. The present Government of India, representing popular political parties, must necessarily be fully responsive to public opinion and to the wishes of the legislature.

In view of this situation, the inevitable conclusions arrived at are that the I.N.A. prisoners serving their sentences at present should be released and further that the forfeited balance of their pay should be given to the I.N.A. personnel. Whatever personal opinions or predilections there might be this conclusion cannot be avoided. The Commander-in-Chief however, while appreciating all these and other reasons, is strongly opposed both to the release of the I.N.A. men in prison and to the payment of the forfeited balance of pay. He feels that any such course would be interpreted as appeasement of wrong-doing and would impair the morale of the Army. It would further, in his opinion, be the thin end of the wedge for the reinstatement of the I.N.A. men in the Army. He has pointed out that in fact very generous treatment was accorded to the I.N.A. personnel and only a very few of them accused of brutality were tried and sentenced. In such cases clemency would be misplaced and misinterpreted. In the main, his argument is that both the British and the Indian personnel in the Army would react unfavourably to any such clemency, more especially the British personnel.

The arguments advanced by the Commander-in-Chief are worthy of consideration and it is clear that any step which leads to the loss of morale in the Army is always to be deprecated. While this is perfectly true, it has to be borne in mind whether any other step or the maintenance of the *status quo* will not lead to graver consequences in the Army itself. Some of the political aspects have been pointed out above. Those political consequences would lead to the I.N.A. question again becoming an important issue in the country, agitating people's minds generally and more especially the minds of the officers and men in the Indian Army. Public agitation would grow and because this is in regard to an issue connected with the Army, army-men would take the deepest interest in it. There would be debate and argument within the Army and possibly deep feelings may be roused. This is not likely to be conducive to maintenance of the morale and solidarity of the Army. Disruptive tendencies would begin to function. This question, it should be remembered, cuts across the so-called communal barriers.

If, as is suggested, the convicted I.N.A. men in prison are released and arrears of pay given the interest of the public in this question will fade away and even if some people in the Army do not like this decision, there will be no room for debate or controversy in the Army. It would be a statesmanlike method of dealing with a delicate problem, so that it does not leave a trail of conflict and bitterness behind it.

At the time of conviction of these men considerable criticism was made of what appeared to be a certain discrimination between some of the I.N.A. men who had been tried or not tried and those persons who were tried and sentenced. It is true that the reason given for the subsequent trials was brutality. Nevertheless, in the peculiar circumstances of a very difficult position normal standards could not easily be applied, nor were all the facts known.

The public, therefore, was firmly of opinion that there had been discrimination.

In the event of these men continuing in prison, there is little doubt that various elements in the country will make this a primary issue. Many discontented persons, including ex-army personnel, will be attracted by this issue and it is quite possible that a new organisation, chiefly consisting of ex-soldiers, will grow up. Dangerous tendencies will come into evidence, affecting not only the Army but public life generally. In the interests of the Army, therefore, it is incumbent that we should avoid any step which leads to such consequences.

There have already been indications of some aggressive and forward step being taken by some individuals both in the I.N.A. and outside. On the 23rd January, a conference is being held in Calcutta of I.N.A. men. This conference may lead to the formation of a new organisation which would not exercise a healthy influence on public life. It is obviously desirable that if a step is to be taken, it should be taken before the 23rd of January. To be compelled by public opinion to take it later would be neither graceful nor effective. It would savour too much of the wrong kind of appeasement, that is, giving in to threat.

The question of the payment of forfeited balances of pay is also important. In the main it affects the rank and file; Government have already paid a major portion of the assignments made by I.N.A. officers and men out of their pay in favour of their relatives. Thus the amount to be paid would be the balance left over. In a considerable number of cases full pay has already been paid. Non-payment of these arrears of pay has led to and wil lead to very great dissatisfaction in large numbers of people and might lead them to anti-social activities. Many of these men have been supported by public charity. This does not appear to be a healthy way of dealing with the problem. To have a large number of ex-soldiers reduced to absolute poverty is to

invite trouble, more especially at a time when labour all over the country is excited and aggressive.

I would like to make it clear that there is no question before us of re-instatement of the I.N.A. personnel in the defence services. This matter should be kept entirely apart and not allowed to confuse the issue. Having given this matter most careful consideration I must say that it would be exceedingly unwise to entertain the proposal. I am, therefore, not putting forward this proposal and I do not intend to do so.

I feel, however, that the time has definitely come for the Government of India to decide in favour of the release of I.N.A. prisoners and the payment of the forfeited balance of pay to the I.N.A. personnel. If Cabinet agrees to this course a recommendation to this effect might be sent to the Commander-in-Chief.

7

ON SCIENCE AND PLANNING

1. Letter to the President, British Association for the Advancement of Science[1]

New Delhi
4th October 1946

Dear Mr. President,[2]
I am writing this letter on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Indian Science Congress Association. The Association is anxious to promote the cause of international cooperation in scientific work and research, and in particular, to develop contacts between Indian scientists and eminent men and women of science in other countries. With a view to furthering this cause, the Association wishes to invite some distinguished scientists from other countries on short visits to India, beginning with the next session of the Indian Science Congress Association, which is to be held in Delhi from the 2nd to 8th January 1947.[3] It is hoped that each scientist will find it possible to visit important centres of work in India in his own field of study and, according to his convenience, to give a few lectures, take part in discussions and advise on scientific matters.

The Executive Committee of the Indian Science Congress would be glad if your Academy could accept this invitation and arrange to send a small team of scientists to India. The Association would meet all expenses in India and, where necessary, meet the cost of air passages to and from India. The Association would also be responsible for all local arrangements in India.

Professor P.C. Mahalanobis, F.R.S., General Secretary of the Indian Science Congress Association, is shortly visiting U.K. and U.S.A. and I am asking him to give you such further information and assistance as you may desire.

We trust that we shall have the full cooperation of your Association and that our joint endeavours will not only further the cause of science, but also the peace and progress of the world.

Accept, Mr. President, the assurance of our high regard for you and your colleagues.

I am,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Available in the Museum, Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta.
2. Sir Henry Dale (1875-1968); Director, National Institute for Medical Research, 1928-42; President of the Royal Society, 1940-45; President, British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1947.
3. The thirty-fourth annual meeting of the Indian Science Congress Association was held at Delhi under the auspices of the University of Delhi from 3 to 8 January 1947.

2. The Common Man and Plans for Development[1]

I am happy to associate myself with this exhibition. As I sat here I had a feeling of shame, not about myself particularly but that we should gather here today to see what is called the first exhibition of its kind in India. That really is an astonishing fact. The second fact which stands out is that this exhibition is an effort which, as I see, is practically confined to selected people. Mr. Khosla[2] has talked a great deal of the common man and how these schemes are to benefit the common man. I should like common men to look at the exhibition and to understand it because most of us who are present here do not require much conviction and argument. It is they who require the exhibition—who do not understand what is being done—and unless they understand it is quite possible that the work of the engineers and others may come to a stop occasionally, because we are dealing here with vast schemes affecting tens of millions of people.

You can never have these vast schemes working efficiently unless you have the cooperation in some measure of the people affected by them. You have to acquire land for all big schemes. No peasant would like to part with it. You go through various legal processes to acquire land and begin your schemes. The peasantry only knows that they have been pushed out of their land. They do not know what is going to be done and how it is going to benefit them, to raise their standards of life in many ways. If you explain to them not merely just orally but by facts and comparison, their reaction would be tremendous.

Unfortunately we do not all know that among the basic and fundamental things about India, or any other country, are these vast projects of development. I am fascinated by them. I have been greatly impressed by reading about the Tennessee Valley[3] and what has been done about the vast schemes of development which have been carried out in the Soviet Union.[4] Pictures

1. Speech at the opening of an exhibition of irrigation, engineering and research at New Delhi on 27 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times* and *National Herald*, 28 November 1946.
2. A.N. Khosla (b. 1892); Chairman, Central Water and Power Commission, 1945-53; Vice-Chancellor, Roorkee University, 1954-59; Member of Parliament, 1958-59; Member, Planning Commission, 1959-62; Governor of Orissa, 1962-68.
3. The Tennessee Valley Authority, an autonomous public corporation set up by President Roosevelt in 1933, built nine main river dams and many subsidiary ones within 11 years. During the Second World War it supplied power facilities to the atom bomb plant at Oak Ridge, and to other strategic industries.
4. As part of the First Five Year Plan in the Soviet Union, the great dam on the lower Dnieper was constructed by Americans.

come to my mind of a rapidly changing India, of rapidly advancing standards of life and of huge tracts which lie almost waste being brought under cultivation. Yet as Mr. Khosla pointed out how few people realised them and how few amongst us may have any real idea and emotional appreciation of what these schemes and projects signify. It is not only necessary to have a factual knowledge of the potentialities of these schemes but a real emotional appreciation of what these schemes and projects seek to do. We have to understand what they aim at in the scheme of things in the lives of millions of people. I believe it is interesting for people sitting in selected offices to look at the bright facts before them. The people outside even do not know these facts. But if these schemes are to be understood they have to be understood intellectually, even more so emotionally. If we understand them emotionally then perhaps we can translate them emotionally in terms of the people and they become living vital things. Otherwise they are merely charts and maps in the engineers' room. If I had my way before I start a scheme like this, I would do widespread propaganda among the people concerned, have pictures, cinema shows and museums, maps and charts showing the schemes, what we are going to build, what the expected results would be and thereby produce a sense of expectation, of exaltation, in these people of the things to come. You will find then that you work in a new atmosphere, you work with the cooperation of thousands of millions of people and work will go faster. Engineers and others have to come out of their shells and to consider things from the popular point of view. So I would suggest to you, both engineers and others who are otherwise connected with these schemes, to consider these from the popular point of view, how to approach people and make them understand.

Now you have put up this exhibition which I shall open in a few minutes. It is a good thing by which I should profit and you should also profit by going through it. But this is not enough. I should like that these should be understood by the common man about whom you talk so much. In various places in Europe and in America, there are magnificent museums, exhibitions for the peasant, for the worker, for the student and for everybody. Our museums are museums of antiquity. They are interesting and I should like to preserve them. But we want museums of current human activity to show what is being done and what should be done, to interest millions of this country in the projects in hand. Irrigation projects which are of interest to millions of people in this country are left to arguments. We must have some kind of permanent museums where peasants could go, see and learn. Peasants are the most conservative element in a country's population and their isolationism has to be broken. It might not be so now, but ultimately all major decisions would have to be taken with their consent. If you really want improvement, you must make them understand by illustration. You have to improve the whole lot somehow. It is essential for any

Government which claims to be democratic to approach the peasant and give him the facts. Otherwise the peasant will not understand the scheme. So it has become fundamentally important not only to think about these schemes, to draw them up and to build them but to explain them in order to get the cooperation, goodwill and understanding of the vast number of people affected; otherwise there will be tremendous waste of energy and no appreciation of what you have done.

I entirely agree with what Mr. Khosla has said about the press in India. How little space is given to these vast projects and schemes. But I imagine ultimately it is the fault of Mr. Khosla and the likes of him. Can you expect a pressman or anybody to fish out the facts and figures about the schemes and to present those reports to the public? This is not pressmen's job. Something precise, definite and constructive should be presented to them. I should like to know to what extent the Central Board of Irrigation or any other Government department has interested itself in it. In fact you do not allow the public to come to your office to find out the facts. So it is not the fault of the press ultimately. You must ensure that material is supplied to the press, who should take advantage of it and give publicity to it.

Personally, as I said before, I am vastly interested in these schemes and nothing would please me more than if I could concentrate all my time and attention on these schemes and various other aspects of planning in India. I would say that most of the people have no conception of what planning means. With all respect to those who use the word planning frequently enough—even members of the Planning Department and the like—I would say that most of them have not the remotest conception of what planning means. Each person moving about in a little circle is not planning. Planning is a conception of the whole and developing each aspect of that whole in relation to other parts. You cannot plan separately, you cannot plan departmentally, you cannot plan in any way unless you grasp that planning means an all-round development of national economy and national life. You must bear the whole picture in mind and then you have to consider the basic things first on which the rest of the superstructure may be built. We shout a lot about our industries. In India they started mostly with jute, cotton textiles and the like. They did some good and a lot of harm. But they are more or less auxiliaries, superficial industries, dependent on other countries for machinery, etc. You cannot industrialise a country by these superficial industries. If you go right down, the first thing required is power. Without power we cannot have any industry and the present power resources of India are fantastically limited. It is very well to take credit for the irrigation works in India. No doubt they are something to talk about. But what about the development of power resources? It is this which we should feel ashamed of. Unless power resources are increased—as they will no doubt increase—you cannot build up. No doubt you want finance—the

basis for all this—but the basic thing is power. Of course money is involved in everything. But it is obvious that when things have got to be done, money is not allowed to come in the way. I have no doubt when we come to the final conclusion, when we have finally decided to do something, money will be found for it and must be found, specially when the money required is really in the nature of tremendous investments which are likely to pay dividends, a hundred or thousand times, in the near future. You must view these things in the broad perspective of national self-sufficiency. Let us have as great a measure of self-sufficiency as possible. If we are not self-sufficient, we are dependent on other countries, may be for food, may be for other things. If we are dependent we may get into conflicts while we may avoid them if we have a large measure of self-sufficiency. Some of our needs we cannot supply. We have to get them from abroad. Self-sufficiency does not mean cutting the international trade which will increase but not in the basic things that we require.

These various irrigation projects that have been mentioned to us today, I wish them to function. All are very large schemes and therefore I am greatly interested and I want India to be interested. I want the press of India to take them up and explain them to the people of India. I want engineers, who are concerned, to help the press in India. Then only we can have a wider understanding of more important things in India than the trivialities which are called politics.

3. Science in the Service of the Community[1]

I should like to assure this Science Congress and our friends who have come from abroad that we want to cooperate with science abroad in every way to advance the cause of peace in the world, peace and progress of humanity. But while giving that undertaking and pledge, I want to make it perfectly clear that we will not cooperate in the ways of war.

I do represent in some small measure something of the new India that you see rising about us. I think it is right and proper and very necessary for the world of science to be in intimate contact with the new India. It is also essential that new India should also come in intimate contact with the world

1. Presidential address at the Thirty-Fourth Indian Science Congress, Delhi, 3 January 1947. From the *Proceedings of the Thirty-Fourth Indian Science Congress, Delhi, 1947* (Calcutta, 1948), pp. 1-4, and from *The Hindustan Times—Science Congress Supplement*, 4 January 1947.

of science. Because if science—whatever progress it may make—is isolated from the living currents it will not go very far.

If the new currents of renascent India go along lines that are not lines of science, then they too will go into a blind alley. Therefore it becomes essential that the two must march together.

Many of you are aware of what has been happening in India during the last quarter of a century and much more recently. A person like me who is not exactly a man of politics has to take an intimate part in political activity. I have often asked myself the question why this is so. Why should I go into politics? It is so because it is not possible to progress in any field, more particularly in the field of science, until you remove the vast number of fetters which prevent people from functioning as they ought to.

I do hope that now, when India is on the verge of independence and science in India too is coming of age, it will try to solve the problems of the new India by rapid, planned development on all sectors and try to make her more and more scientifically-minded.

Surely, science is not merely an individual's search for truth. It is something infinitely more than that if it worked for the community. Its objective must be to remove the ills of the community. It must have a social objective before it. For a hungry man or a hungry woman, truth has little meaning. He wants food. For a hungry man, God has no meaning. He wants food. And India is a hungry, starving country and to talk of truth and God and even of many of the fine things of life to the millions who are starving is a mockery. We have to find food for them, clothing, housing, education, health and so on—all the absolute necessaries of life that every man should possess. When we have done that we can philosophise and think of God. So, science must think in terms of the 400 million persons in India. Obviously, you can only think in those terms and work along those lines on the wider scale of coordinated planning.

I hope that the Science Congress will devote itself to this task and not wait merely for the Government to take action. Governments may be good and may be bad, but Governments normally are very slow and the only thing that moves them is some immediate public outcry which affects their future indirectly. Therefore I should discourage among the scientists a reliance always on what Government may or may not do.

Naturally, they have a right to expect things from the Government, and, speaking just as one Member of the present Government of India—speaking, may be, partly for my colleagues but largely for myself—I may say that we are intensely interested in scientific development in India and we shall do everything in our power to encourage scientific research. We should like to tap all the latent scientific talent in the country and to give it opportunities for growth and service to the community.

What the future will bring I do not know; I can neither foretell the future,

nor have I any authority to bind my country down to what it may or may not do in future, but in these days, so soon after the last war, when people again think of wars and when scientists are yoked into work in preparation for future wars, I think it is desirable and necessary that men and women of science should also think about the way they are often misused and exploited for base ends and should make it clear that they do not want to be so exploited.

Anyway, I do hope that India in future will not allow herself to be dragged into wars which are likely to be far more terrible than any that we have experienced thus far.

I say that, and yet I know how difficult it is for a line to be drawn between scientific work for peace and for war. This great force—atomic energy—that has suddenly come through scientific research may be used for war or may be used for peace. We cannot neglect it because it might be used for war; obviously in India we want to develop it, and we will develop it to the fullest. Fortunately we have eminent scientists here who can do so. We shall develop it, I hope, in cooperation with the rest of the world and for peaceful purposes.

It is a tragedy that, when these enormous forces are available in the world for beneficent purposes and for raising human standards to undreamt of heights, people should still think of war and conflict and should still maintain economic and social structures which promote monopoly and create differences in standards of wealth between various groups and peoples. It is a tragedy, whatever other people might say about it, and no man of science should accept it as a right ordering of events. So in India today, while we are busy with our own political and economic problems, we have inevitably begun to think more and more of the vaster problems that face us and in the decision of which science must inevitably play a big part.

I invite all of you who are present here, young men and old in the field of science in India, to think in these larger terms of India's future and become crusaders for a rapid bettering of the 400 millions in India, and crusaders of peace in India and the world and international cooperation for peace and progress.

I do believe firmly that the only right approach to the world problems and to our national problems is the approach of science, that is to say, of the spirit of science and method of science. Somehow eminent men of science when they come out of their study or laboratory forget the approach and method of science in other fields of life. While in our particular field, we may be meticulously careful, when we come out into the social and economic fields, we forget the scientific approach. I firmly believe that it is through the method and spirit of science that we can ultimately solve our problems. All over the world it is because we forget the scientific approach that many of our troubles arise.

While you must discuss your particular problems I want that you should not ignore the picture as a whole. There has been a tendency in the last few generations towards greater and greater specialization. It has yielded rich results but it has led to the narrowing of vision of the average person. Perhaps some of our troubles are due to this fact, and also because you can never understand a picture fully unless you have a conception of the whole.

You cannot divorce science from social and political happenings and from the economic structure of the world. Therefore, perhaps it is time that science developed a certain philosophy and unity, if I may put it so. It had this quality in the olden days when science presented a smaller picture than it does now. That gave a certain organic unity to it. Now with each department going its own way, it has become difficult. I do think that in the present circumstances of the world we should develop something of that unity of outlook and appreciation of the world problems. Nearly two years ago a bomb burst in Hiroshima. It created inevitably a great deal of excitement. It seemed to me to herald all kinds of enormous changes, constructive as well as destructive. It produced a conflict in people's minds as to where we were going, rather where civilization was going, what things could happen. Whether it was necessary or not I do not know, but obviously it led to one question which troubled a large number of people. The question was whether to gain a certain end any means and every means possible should be adopted because the means adopted at Hiroshima were horrible beyond words. May be the end desired was achieved, but it is a question which every scientist has to consider.

Science has two faces like Janus: science has its destructive side and a constructive, creative side. Both have gone on side by side and both still go on. No one knows which will ultimately triumph. Hiroshima became a symbol of this conflict and, in spite of all the decisions of the Atomic Energy Commission of the United Nations[2]—and we welcome those decisions, of course, in so far as they go—the doubt remains in one's mind as to where we are speeding.

On the other hand, apart from the atomic bomb aspect of it, we are obviously on the threshold of a new age in the sense of enormous power resources being put at the disposal of humanity and the community. Will this new age change—and I think it will change—enormously the whole structure of society? My mind goes back to the time when gunpowder burst upon the world. Gunpowder at any rate pushed the Middle Ages away completely and fairly rapidly, in course of time, brought or helped to bring about a new political and economic structure.

2. On 30 December 1946, the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission adopted an American plan recommending a treaty, binding on all members of the United Nations, for peaceful uses of atomic energy. The plan also suggested the setting up of an international authority to give effect to the treaty.

Of course, there were many forces at work. Nevertheless, gunpowder did produce that powerful effect on society and ultimately out of the feudal order a new capitalist order gradually developed. Now I wonder whether this so-called atomic bomb is not also the herald of a new age, of a new structure of society, which has to be established in order to fit in with present conditions. All these thoughts come to my mind because I want to understand this picture in this broad way and not to be lost in the argument. I myself am convinced that there is going to be no very great progress either in science or in other ways unless certain fundamental changes take place in the social structure. Here in India we have a peculiar structure. You can see in different places different types of social structures. You can see social structures approximating to those in the early Middle Ages as well as to those of the 20th century. This picture which is rapidly changing even the 20th century structure does not seem to answer the present needs.

So personally I feel convinced that a radical change must come, a radical change in the direction of allowing the whole community to develop and not only a small group on top. I do not think that the enormous big projects that we have in view in India can really succeed without the cooperation of the people at large. I think we shall be able to turn these vital currents in the right direction and mould them on scientific lines.

I do not know what line India will take when she is independent. I know the line I would like her to take and I shall do my utmost to that end. When this mighty force becomes free suddenly, there may be some disorder. When an ancient tree is uprooted it shakes the ground round about it, and today many old trees are being uprooted in India. An enormous new energy will be released when these hundreds of millions of people are free. Which direction they will take is difficult to say.

Many of us are naturally tremendously worried with some events that are happening in India. Many of our friends from abroad must also have their minds filled with the picture of conflict in India because that conflict, bad as it is in India, is magnified a hundred fold when it crosses the seas and people seem to think that the sole or main occupation of the people in India today is to cut each other's throat.

While conditions are in some respects not at all good, still when we think of the brighter picture of India, whose people, after having been largely static for many years, are in motion today, then those conflicts become rather petty in their perspective. When a whole people are on the move, they go astray here and there, but the main thing is the vitality they possess and, even if they go astray, they will come back to the right path.

That is the real thing, the encouraging thing, that makes one certain that India has a tremendous future in store for her and that, as soon as we get over our present troubles, there will be a flowering of science and other activities in India which will probably astonish the world.

That is inevitable in this mighty period of transition. What is far more important is how we are going to develop. The special job of the scientist is to lead, to develop and to coordinate.

If this country is going to develop as it is going to, that development is not going to take place in an isolated way; it must be coordinated, it must be planned and it must be related. Unless this is done, you cannot go far.

The first thing that we must realize is the energy of the people. Secondly, we must provide opportunities for them to train themselves. There would be a tremendous amount of wastage unless people are trained. Thus far the Government of India have been singularly lacking in any planning or any coordination. Each department thinks for itself regardless of what others are doing. Unless there is coordination, there will be bottlenecks and schemes will come to nothing. So it has become essential to think in terms of large-scale coordinated planning in which every sphere of national life and economy is considered, and fitted into the picture. An attempt was made by the National Planning Committee,[3] but unfortunately owing to political happenings that committee could not function for long periods at a time.

Some attempt is being made gradually to work towards that end. That will involve first of all a clear enumeration of the objectives of planning and of the machinery of planning. Then the plan itself will have to be gradually worked out. That plan will have to be considered and examined from time to time and varied in order to fit in with the changing circumstances. For unless there is a carefully planned approach and unless the plan is made by scientists and on scientific lines, I do not think it will take us very far.

The first objective, it seems to me, from any point of view and more especially from the point of view of science, is to help in the building of a free and self-reliant India. India today has made its mark in the world of science, more especially in theoretical physics and some other departments also. We have done well when we have hardly tapped the talent in India. We have only scratched the barest surface of the Indian people and yet we have done tolerably well, and now, when I think of what we can do, and will no doubt do, when we open the doors of opportunity to a large number of people in India, then the kind of picture I see rather overwhelms me. If we could tap, say, even five per cent of the latent talent in India for scientific purposes, we could have a host of scientists in India.

Today, of course, we have tapped only less than one per cent of our talent. To open the doors of opportunity and to build a political and social system which allows people to have the capacity to develop and function for the good of the community should be our main aim.

3. The National Planning Committee came into existence in October 1938. The war and political developments, however, impeded its work and led to total suspension of work after the arrest of its chairman in 1940. It held its final meeting in New Delhi on 26 March 1949.

I want to put this aspect of our national movement before you. It aims to open the doors of opportunity for everyone as far as possible so that he can go as far as he can and be able not only to do good to himself but to the community. It is for this reason that a large number of us who might otherwise have functioned in other fields and who may even now function in other fields when the chance comes have largely confined our activities intensively to the political field.

It is a great pleasure for us to meet together and to make people realize—I hope that at least scientists realize—that science is one all over the world. While we may inevitably function in national spheres in many other ways, science is international and should have an international outlook and should gradually change national outlook into international.

I hope the visit of scientists from abroad will bear out the truth of this statement and will make our people who, owing to their peculiar circumstances, are intensely nationalistic, realize that science is international. I welcome the delegates from the U.K., the U.S.A., China, Canada and France.[4]

I am sorry that Soviet delegates have not yet arrived. They will be here if not this evening then tomorrow so that we may renew contacts with them also. Moscow may be far from here, but the Soviet Union and India are neighbours. Their boundaries almost touch one another and we shall have a great deal to do as neighbours with each other.

I hope this Science Congress, meeting at a time which in India's history is a very significant time, will prove also very significant in the development of science in India.

4. Britain was represented by Professor P.M.S. Blackett and 9 others, the U.S. by 5, Canada by 4, the Soviet Union by 3 and China and France by one each.

4. The necessity of Atomic Research in India[1]

Presently we may have to follow other countries in having a great atomic energy research institute also, not to make bombs, I hope, but nevertheless

1. Speech after laying the foundation stone of the National Physical Laboratory at New Delhi on 4 January 1947. From *The Hindu*, 5 January 1947; also printed in *New India Speaks* (Calcutta, 1947), pp. 114-117.

I do not see how we can lag behind in this very important matter, because atomic energy is going to play a vast and dominating part, I suppose, in the future shape of things. Already it is known that radioactive elements that are produced can be used for therapeutic purposes but in regard to other matters too it will make power mobile and this mobility of power can make industry develop anywhere. We will not be tied up so much by the accidents of geography. Atomic energy will help cottage industry. Obviously if you have atomic energy at your disposal or some form of it, you can work in small units much more easily, effectively and efficiently, so that all these very practical aspects of it make it incumbent on us to think in terms of atomic energy research on a big scale—apparently it cannot be done on a small scale.

I hope that the National Physical Laboratory which will soon begin functioning here will be followed by numerous other research institutes and laboratories and a stream of earnest young men and women will go through it and come out to serve the country and the world. During the last few months I have been watching and reading about these schemes of various types of laboratories being set up in different parts of India and I have also to some extent scrutinised other vast schemes—river valley schemes, projects, barrages, dams, etc., some of them bigger in scope than the Tennessee Valley Scheme—and my mind has been fired by the picture that I saw emerging out of these great schemes. In the turmoil of the present what seemed to me far more important and essential was laying the foundations of this great development of India.

I fully agree with the statement that what comes in the way of rapid development in India is not so much lack of money as lack of trained personnel. We talk too much of money or lack of money and yet, as everybody knows, when people are bent on doing something certainly, when they are bent on carrying on a war, there is never lack of money. It is only in regard to constructive schemes that people talk of lack of money. I am quite convinced in my mind that lack of money must not be allowed to come in the way of any scheme which develops India.

We must train our boys and yet I have had cases before me often enough of very competent young men who have done well in the universities later, for lack of opportunity, drifting to some very secondary job. They go into some executive services, probably thinking that they will get a little more security there. The country loses talent which really could be used to better advantage than sitting in office and doing some utterly unnecessary work.

There is a great deal to be done to train people but we have at the same time to offer opportunities to those who are being trained to do work. In India we possess very little in the way of data or statistics and we require a tremendous development of the branches collecting data in regard to the 400 million people of India. At the same time we cannot just stop waiting

for data to be collected before we can do something. We have to start doing something and the essential thing to do, therefore, is to start having these research institutes and at the same time lay the foundations for the development of large-scale power. Whatever we do, we shall require huge power resources in India. At present this huge country has very little power resources at her disposal. There is tremendous power potential, no doubt. It can be said with confidence that India is one of the richest countries in the world in regard to her mineral resources, her manpower and even in regard to her potential power resources, so that we have everything at hand. The question is how we can yoke all these things together. All this would rapidly change the whole face of India. Science had in the past changed the face of society considerably, probably very largely unconsciously and to some extent consciously; but today it is changing the society deliberately and consciously. We in India have many difficulties to face. Nevertheless I do not think we cannot get over them rapidly. I believe it is easy to go ahead in India very fast and when I say so I am not thinking merely of the technical difficulties of the problem which are obvious but the far greater difficulty about which possibly scientists do not think much but I have to think a lot and that is the reaction of everything that we do on the large masses of people in the country. Unless we have their goodwill and their partial understanding at least in what we are doing we shall not go very far. They will stop us and become a brake. That is why it becomes necessary to make a deliberate approach to make the masses of the country understand what we are doing.

Many of us are still rather restricted and hide-bound in our outlook in regard to many things, notably social customs and the like. Science in the past had helped to some extent at least to rid mankind of the terror of the Gods. Much remains still to be done in that matter but certainly I shall like science to help in this respect in India. And then at the same time there is perhaps a greater terror even than the terror of the Gods and that is the terror of man himself. In that science and the scientific approach may also help a great deal.

Sometimes I feel a little sorry that I am not much younger than I am when I think of this picture of the new India growing up, these vast changes impending, of young boys and girls growing up in this atmosphere with this new training and outlook and building this great structure about which so many of us have dreamt so long. I feel a little sorry that I may not be there to see it in its full glory. Nevertheless it is glory enough to take part in the building and to many of us that satisfaction has come in full measure. And I rejoice today at helping in this very small way at the beginnings of this great undertaking.

The primary purpose of the institution that will rise on this site will be removal of the poverty of India's millions and therefore your cooperation and sympathy are necessary for the work of the institution.

5. The Need for a Spirit of Service[1]

Whether this Association is or is not going to be a trade union I do not know. Of course, it will be its function to protect your interests. I hope that in protecting your interests it will not do so at the expense of the community. I suppose scientists have been rather individualistically inclined. Some of them have had power and glory, but for some reason they have not been properly organised. As a group they have not been able to do as much as most groups who are really not so favourably situated, but a time may come when organized scientists may well have the power to hold a pistol at the rest of the community, if they want to. That may happen if science also proceeds purely on the lines of advocating and encouraging the profit motive in the individual.

Power plus profit motive is a very dangerous thing and I should like scientists to develop more of what in India we consider the Brahminic spirit of service. It so happens that I was born a Brahmin, but that has nothing to do with it because we know that the Brahminic spirit is something entirely apart from the Brahmins.

I do not want that the man who receives honours should go without any money, but I hope that in the new set-up that we are likely to have, money at any rate will not have too much power or honour or glory attached to it, and that honour will go to service and learning.

1. Speech at the inaugural meeting of the All-India Scientific Workers' Association at New Delhi on 7 January 1947. From *The Hindustan Times*, 8 January 1947. On 6 January 1947, the General Committee of the Indian Science Congress Association approved the proposal to form an association of scientific workers in India under the auspices of the Indian Science Congress Association. It would frame its own constitution and work independently on the lines of a trade union.

6. Desire for Closer Contacts with the Soviet Union[1]

For many years past we have looked with very great interest towards the Soviet Union for many reasons, but more especially because of the tremend-

1. Response to the speech of the leader of the Soviet delegation to the Indian Science Congress, New Delhi, 7 January 1947. From *The Hindu*, 9 January 1947.

ous achievements of the Soviet Union during the last quarter of a century or so. You are our neighbours and as neighbours we must take interest in each other; we must know each other and develop closer contacts with each other.

But apart from being neighbours, you have been pioneers in many fields and you have transformed the vast tracts of your country before our eyes with a speed that has astonished humanity. Inevitably, when we want to produce great changes in India, we want to learn from your example. We want to know what you have done and how you have done it. Among the many things that you have done is this tremendous flowering of science in the Soviet Union and the application of that science to the betterment of human beings who live in those vast territories.

It is our purpose also to better the lot of the millions who live in India and we want to utilise science to that end and want to learn from you what you have to teach in that respect. So the message you have brought and your coming here has been very welcome to us.

I hope that in the near future our two countries will be able to exchange diplomatic representatives and that, having done so, the door will be opened for closer contact in many fields of beneficent human activity.

I request the Russian delegation to convey to the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union gratitude and thanks for their message[2] and with that gratitude the hope that this visit of yours will lead to closer understanding between our two countries, more especially between the scientists of these countries.

2. Speaking on behalf of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., the Soviet delegate expressed the hope for greater collaboration between the scientists of the two countries.

7. The Indian Association of Scientific Workers[1]

I consider it a privilege to be associated with the Indian Association of Scientific Workers. Such an Association was urgently needed in India and the Indian Science Congress has given shape to it at the right moment. It is meant to protect these workers and to help them. It is meant also for the advancement of science and the service of the community. I hope that scientific workers all over the country will join this Association and make it an active and vital organization.

1. Message given at New Delhi, 14 January 1947. J.N. Collection.

8. To Tara Chand[1]

New Delhi
29th January 1947

My dear Tara Chand,
I have your letter of January 17th. I am writing to Laski accordingly. I think, however, that you should write to him direct also.

About your Science Department I quite agree with you that it should be expanded in every way.[2] We propose to consider the whole question of scientific studies and manpower soon. But the results will take a little time to materialise. Meanwhile, I do not quite know what to do about it, except to send your letter to the Education Department. I am doing so.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 40(23)/56-PMS.
2. Tara Chand had asked for a grant of Rs. 10 lakhs.

9. To Abul Kalam Azad[1]

New Delhi
29th January, 1947

My dear Maulana Sahib,
I enclose a letter from Dr. Tara Chand. In this he refers to the Science Department of the Allahabad University. This Department has done very good work in the past and has at present one of our best scientists, Dr. Krishnan, in charge of it. Unfortunately, work suffers tremendously, because of lack of money. I do not know what can be done in this matter, but I should like to bring it to your notice.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 40(23)/56-PMS.

8

UNIVERSITIES AND STUDENTS

DRIVING THROUGH THE TRIBAL AREAS, OCTOBER 1946

WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN, N.W.F.P., OCTOBER 1946

1. Zakir Husain[1]

During a long stretch of years, mostly devoted to public activities, I have naturally come across a vast number of men and women in India and abroad. It has been my privilege to meet men of outstanding eminence and ability, men and women great in any sense of the word. Looking back on that small and very select company, which stands out head and shoulders above others, I find one person there who has set an extraordinary example of quite unostentatious and efficient work—Dr. Zakir Husain. I have often wondered how many amongst us, who have achieved momentary fame and applause, have really done anything worthwhile which will endure. But in the case of Zakir Husain I have nothing to wonder about, for his achievements are neither momentary nor ephemeral. It is right, therefore, that on the occasion of the celebration of the Jamia's jubilee[2] we should pay our tribute to the real maker of the Jamia. With that tribute I should like to add the affection and admiration of an old friend and comrade.

1. Message on the Silver Jubilee of Jamia Millia, New Delhi, 10 September 1946. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Jamia Millia began on 15 November 1946. It was founded at Aligarh in 1920 and was transferred to Delhi in 1925. Zakir Husain, one of its founders, was also its Vice-Chancellor, 1926-48.

2. The Jamia Millia[1]

My memory goes back to the early beginnings of the noncooperation movement in 1920. I visited Aligarh then with the special purpose of seeing the Jamia Millia Islamia which had recently come into being under the guidance of Maulana Mohamad Ali. Ardent young boys had come out of the Aligarh University to join the Jamia in furtherance of the noncooperation and Khilafat movements. Under Maulana Mohamad Ali's dynamic leadership the new Jamia was full of life and vigour. I remember writing an article[2] about it

1. Message on the Silver Jubilee of Jamia Millia, New Delhi, 10 September 1946. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Not traceable.

then in which I described the Jamia as "a lusty child of the noncooperation movement".

Years passed and the Jamia moved to Delhi. It had to face a hard time and it had many ups and downs, but it had something which few, if any other educational establishment in India, possessed. It had an extraordinarily able, devoted and self-sacrificing band of workers under the leadership of Dr. Zakir Husain.[3] Thus, in spite of many wants and lack of every normal facility, it had something far more important than money or patronage. Because of that it not only continued to live but to prosper. There was nothing flashy about it, but in those early years deep foundations were laid of an institution which was to be unique in India. It has grown, spread out in every way, and extorted admiration even from those who were unwilling to grant it. The object it set before it was not to train people just for degrees and service but to produce men of character who would serve larger causes and not merely be wrapped up in their individual interests. It followed, therefore, the new basic system of education of which it was a pioneer in India.

Twenty-five years have passed and a whole generation has gone by. It is pleasing and satisfying to see the good work rewarded in this manner. On the occasion of the jubilee I send my greetings to all people connected with the Jamia and more specially to Dr. Zakir Husain and his fine band of colleagues. May the Jamia flourish, ever keeping its ideals before it, and go on producing men of worth who will be true and worthy children of India and who, by their service of the people, will help to raise them to higher levels.

3. In 1926 under the leadership of Zakir Husain the teachers and staff of the Jamia Millia formed a society known as the *Anjuman-i-Jamia Millia* and took a pledge to serve the Jamia for twenty years on a salary not exceeding Rs. 150/- a month.

3. Training to Serve India[1]

My fear is that from now onwards people might start calling me a doctor, because even without being a doctor people had been coming to me for treatment.

1. Address to the students of the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, 15 December 1946. From *National Herald*, 16 December 1946.

To the outgoing students I stress the need for receiving the right type of training to shoulder the burden of building the India of tomorrow. They can rise in life only up to a point where their capacity can carry them. It is nonsense to say that one can be pushed up merely by patronage or nepotism. The great problem today is to find first-class men. There are always jobs for first-class men. Time is coming fast when India will need a large number of first-rate men. All the non-Indian civil servants in India will have to change their character and many of them will have to leave India because free India will have to be manned and conducted by Indians. I have received hundreds of applications for foreign service. There are many applications from men who are good, but there are very many from men who are not good enough. Therefore I advise you to get the necessary training to serve the new India. I want students to train themselves for specialised jobs and not to fritter away their energies in petty conflicts and small controversies.

I also thank the Municipal Board[2] for the welcome address and advise every citizen living in municipalities to take interest in the affairs of their cities. If their municipal administration is slack in any sphere, they should be able to give it a good shaking.

2. After the convocation an address of welcome was presented to Nehru by the municipal board of Varanasi.

4. Kashi Vidyapith[1]

In thinking of the Kashi Vidyapith[2] my mind goes back to Shiv Prasad Gupta, the brave and generous founder of the Vidyapith. I also think of the early days of this institution, a quarter of a century or more ago, when it took birth in the turmoil of the early days of the noncooperation movement. To all of us, who experienced that tremendous upheaval, both in the country and in our inner selves, that memory will remain as a cherished possession.

Fathered by the national struggle and the passionate urge for freedom, the Kashi Vidyapith has never lost touch with its parentage. Repeatedly its professors and students have plunged into mass struggles and suffered in their cause. Inevitably, this has affected the educational character of the institu-

1. New Delhi, 22 December 1946. Message to Kashi Vidyapith on its silver jubilee to be celebrated from 27 January 1947. From the *National Herald*, 27 January and *The Hindustan Times*, 28 January 1947.
2. Founded in Varanasi in 1921 during the noncooperation movement.

tion, and a continuity and stability in the course of study has not been maintained. Perhaps, this could not be avoided and in a country under alien domination the primary urge must be to attain freedom. The Vidyapith represented this primary urge at the cost of much else and so it did not show as good results in some directions as we had hoped.

It remained throughout the torchbearer of India's independence. That is success enough, though from worldly standards this may not be counted much. We have not followed worldly standards in India during these 26 years, and yet we have the satisfaction that we have achieved something substantial, not for our petty selves but for the country we cherish.

The Vidyapith has had to face very great difficulties, as any institution must, which throws itself into political mass struggles. The time has not yet come when we can say that the period of struggle is over, but now is the time for constructive effort and I hope that the Vidyapith will now show as good results in the field of national education as it has shown in the field of political struggle.

5. The Many Forms of Struggle[1]

If we look around Asia today, we see conflict over wide areas in many countries. Here in India we live in the midst of conflict and struggle, though for the moment that conflict and struggle may not be so obvious to an outsider. Obviously when a country is deprived of its freedom, there are only two choices left to it; one is to submit ignobly and the other is to struggle and fight for freedom. There is no middle course and a country that finally submits ceases to have any soul or spirit. The ways of conflict and struggle may be many, but the point is that the spirit of the people should be in a continual state of revolt against submission. How that revolt takes shape or what methods it employs is a matter to be decided in view of the circumstances.

So in India today you see a curious picture of some of us being associated with the Government of India, some of our colleagues running Provincial Governments and yet at the same time in a sense we are still in opposition in so far as we have to carry on the struggle for freedom. I do not know what

1. Address to the All India Students' Congress, Delhi, 31 December 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 1 January, *The Hindu* and *The Free Press Journal*, 2 January 1947 and P.M. Joshi's *Student Revolts in India* (Bombay, 1972), pp. 94-97.

the next few months may bring to us, what steps the country may have to take in order to assert her freedom or to achieve it. But one thing is certain that we are today in a process of struggle.

Your idea of struggle apparently is shouting and marching in the streets. That may take place sometimes and other things may also take place sometimes, but when a nation struggles, it does not merely shout. When two mighty forces come into conflict, there are many ways of struggle and I tell you that today in India the struggle for freedom is going on as intensely as it has ever gone on. You have to realise that fact and not wait supinely for some future time when an order is issued and you perform publicly in the market place or in fields or factories. The nature of the struggle may be different today; it may change its shape and form tomorrow. We are functioning differently because our nation has grown.

We are, it is often said, on the verge of complete independence. So we are. But remember this, that when you are often right near the walls of a citadel which you hope to capture very soon, still the walls may intervene and you may have to face your stiffest fight there. But the point is that you must not think of the struggle merely in terms of demonstrations or public activities of that type. If you work, if you organise, that is part of the struggle; if you refuse to submit to injustice, that is part of the struggle.

The final climax of it may be something else, but the final climax only comes when you have brought the struggle to a certain pitch. That struggle goes on today and though I am in the Government of India, I am as much part of that struggle and carrying on that struggle as I have ever been in my life.

In the conception of the present state of India you see that struggle in many shapes and forms. You see reactionary elements in India lining up with foreign elements and trying to impede our march forward. All that becomes part of the struggle. So you must see the complete picture and prepare yourself to face that in an ordered, organised and disciplined way. We must function as an organised nation and not lose ourselves in petty squabbles.

This is a special occasion because I understand that today you are holding a preparatory conference to lay the foundations of an All-Asiatic Students' Conference.[2] Obviously such an Asian students' conference will be of great importance and will be full of promise for the future. We welcome the delegates and representatives of Asiatic countries present here, not only in their capacity as representatives of their nations but also in the sense that today to some extent we represent the unity of Asia.

2. The decision to convene an Asiatic and Colonial Students' Conference on the basis of common aims and aspirations was first made in a resolution passed by the Working Committee of the All India Students' Congress in September 1945.

You all talk of Asia. What concept of Asia have you got? Asia is the mother of continents. Asia has been the mother of culture in this world. The beginnings of history have been in Asia, and if you look at the long history of humanity you will find that for vast periods it was Asia that was not only the dominating force in the world in cultural and other matters but also in the military sense.

For the last 200 years or so the fate of Asia has gone under eclipse, not so much because Europe dominates it, but for some reason or the other Asiatics became static and dormant and other people who were more vigorous went ahead.

Today we see a renaissance of Asia. Asia is waking up again. It is going through pains and trouble, but the fundamental fact about Asiatic countries that we notice today is this new vitality, this dynamic personality of the ancient mother of continents functioning again. The new Asia will be what young men and young women make of it.

So I should like you to give this message to our friends from abroad.[3] This is a message not only of freedom for Asia but a message of unity of Asia. We do not want this unity to fight against any other continent or country or people. We want unity certainly for our own defence but more so for friendly and peaceful living and for setting an example to others as to how we can combine modern progress with ancient culture which gave peace and equanimity to the countries of Asia.

India, it so happens, has been situated in the centre of both the eastern and western groups of States of Asia. Whether it is from the point of view of defence or trade or commerce or culture, India inevitably becomes a pivot. It is right, therefore, that India should take the lead on this occasion in trying to develop an Inter-Asian Students' Movement. I congratulate you upon it and I hope that you will help, by this process, in bringing about that unity of Asia which we desire.

My advice to you is to divert your energies towards doing constructive work rather than getting offices for personal aggrandisement. I am very much pained to see factionalism and lack of discipline among students. It would not matter if big differences were on fundamental principles, because in a big country like India, there should be unity in diversity, but I feel that personal ends alone and not the larger good of the organisation are at the back of the dispute. I have been told many times that students are ready to advance like an army the moment they get my orders. But I want to remind them that the first essentials of an army are unity and discipline which, I am sorry to say, I do not find in them. A great responsibility has to fall on your shoulders very soon. Are you capable of bearing it? Be prepared for that. I do not know what to do with the gold platter which has been

3. Delegates from several Asian countries were present at the meeting.

presented to me as I have had no connection with gold. I like iron because it is required in industries. I want your hearts to be of iron. Presentation of gold means that you are in the old world.

6. An Asian Students Organisation[1]

India is in a continuous process of transition. The transition is not only political, but socially and economically also there is a swift transition going on. This is also the condition in every Asian country. Asia had become static. It did not change as other parts of the world were changing. It apparently had lost its vitality. As a result of that it became dependent on factors it could not control and also on European countries. This is not so now. There is an all round change and so many factors are contributing to that change. Usually people look at these things superficially and pay importance only to political changes but do not notice the events lying behind these political changes. In India you will see this all round change because of which there is always a continuous crisis. But a continuous crisis does not necessarily mean a continuous conflict. What I mean is that there is a dynamic situation. The forces of change will, in this larger sense, go on in that direction and they cannot be stopped. It is interesting to observe these changes and developments and analyse them and understand them.

You must understand that problems do not arise out of personal likes or dislikes of some persons. One thing is dead certain that religion is not at all an issue in India. The conflicts are political, between different groups; they are not religious.

Question: Do you believe that the British Government will give up India without any revolution?

Jawaharlal Nehru: First one must be clear as to what one means by revolution. Revolution does not merely mean an uprising. A revolution is occurring in India even now. Two forces are in conflict and a third force will emerge out of this conflict. The British structure of Government is changing rapidly. In these changed conditions outsiders can find a place only if they fit in the new picture, otherwise not.

1. Talk with the delegates to the Preparatory Conference of the All Asian Students Conference, Delhi, 10 January 1947. Printed in P.M. Joshi's *Student Revolts in India* (Bombay, 1972), pp. 97-99.

Q: What are your views about the attempt to form an organisation of Asian students?

JN: It will be a very good thing to form an Asian students organisation. Asia is very big and it will be difficult but I do think it very desirable for young people to be in contact with each other to know each other. Besides, in all countries the problems that we are facing, are not only national but international. They affect other countries too. From this point of view also it is good for students to meet. Of course Asian students do not meet in opposition to European or American students. The Asian students organisation if formed will be a group within a larger group. It will be a regional body. This Asian students organisation will enable you to meet occasionally. It is very helpful for those who are students today and in future may be in charge of affairs. Therefore this mutual understanding is quite useful.

Q: Should students dabble in politics?

JN: Every student has to dabble in politics from the point of view of his education. If he is a voter he must understand politics to know how best to exercise his franchise. So politics is also a preparation and education. But there is the students' way of dabbling in politics. They pass resolutions and discuss and debate over them. That too is good. Sometimes students have to participate actively in a revolution. Normally a student has to study and prepare himself. It is dangerous for people to assume larger responsibilities than they can shoulder. There is a tendency to do so which is harmful. The participation of students in politics should be such as would fit in students' life. Of course when there is a big war students leave studies and join the army. But that is an abnormal situation.

7. Literacy Week in U.P.[1]

I send my good wishes on the occasion of the U.P. Education Expansion Department organising a literacy week.[2] The spread of literacy should be one

1. New Delhi, 12 January 1947. J.N. Collection.
2. Organised by the U.P. Government for the removal of illiteracy, from 15 to 19 January 1947.

of our principal concerns. In Mexico every literate person from the President downwards was compelled by law to make at least two others literate. The result of this was a rapid spread of literacy. I think we should also think of some method similar to this. I am sure we can get rid of illiteracy very rapidly if we can set about it in the right way.

8. Faith in India[1]

I thank the Patna University authorities for honouring me by conferring upon me the degree of Doctor of Science. We should draw a moral from the action of the visitors and students who had created a confusion in the beginning but later on behaved in a perfectly disciplined manner. The inherent strength of free India and not revolutionary slogans will win for the country a place of honour in the comity of nations. From this setting of the gathering I draw a picture of India. I have seen two pictures in the *shamiana* itself, one was of the initial chaos and turmoil[2] and the other of the ordered manner in which the audience listened to Mr. Rajagopalachari.[3] This shows that there is nothing inherently bad in the youth of the country or in Indians as a whole. What is needed is a proper appreciation of things to set them on the right path. And when that is done the very weakness might become a source of strength.

I wonder how people can change in a moment. I believe that the mental outlook of the nation also sways between chaos and order in very much the same way.

With or without a doctorate, I have been "doctoring" the nation for a long time. The country is ill with famine, poverty and slavery and I am trying to find a remedy for these ills. Oftentimes, it is not advisable for a physician to treat himself but in this case Indians have to look after themselves because if help is called from outside it will not always be given without certain amount of selfishness. And I believe it can be achieved only if Indians

1. Speech at a special convocation of Patna University to confer an honorary degree of Doctor of Science on Nehru, 17 January 1947. From *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu*, 19 January 1947.
2. Arrangements made for only three thousand persons were upset by a crowd of about 20,000.
3. He delivered the convocation address.

realise the fundamental human values, are sincere in their hearts and pursue high ideals. I believe that Indians are endeavouring towards that end and all the talks that people hear of socialism or communism and other political ideologies reveal the same fact. I hope that Indians will not be slow to realise that to whatever community they belong they will have to live together in this land of their forefathers and it will be better to thrash out their differences according to the canons of civilized conduct rather than be at war against one another.

Apart from the physical ailments of poverty, famine and slavery the nation suffers psychologically also for which the treatment must be found. If you look back into history you will find that the Indian nation had been at the peak of the world's civilization but just now it is facing evil days.

Once more the country is on the march and like the wave of a magician's wand the pristine glory can be restored, but forces are at work which hinder overnight changes.

The age of slavery is passing and the stars of India are bound to shine in the near future once again. But before that happens the Indian people have to prepare and be ready for the moment when they will be fully free.

I am not in the least worried about the British, who are going out of this country. Nor am I worried by the sporadic outbreak of riots in some provinces. I refer to these incidents because Bihar has been the scene of one of these occurrences. What worries me is the direction in which the nation's mind is working. Is the nation confining itself to small things or is there anything bigger in its mind?

The country is passing through a period of transition and there is some confusion during this period and several evil forces have manifested themselves. As an instance, see the communal disturbances in the country which have deeply pained me. These have lowered India in the eyes of the world. I am personally ashamed of these acts. But even in these disturbances, in the midst of my grief, I have seen a ray of hope that has convinced me that the forces of evil have not overwhelmed Indians and that they have not lost actually their good sense. The simple-minded kisans of Bihar had all of a sudden lost their senses, and done the worst acts of violence, in the name of religion in the wake of the recent disturbances. They had not stopped their depredations because of the threat of the use of force against them, but had quickly climbed down because they had realised in their heart of hearts the folly and wrong that they had committed. This made me optimistic even in the face of what I had seen of the depths of human degradation. This made me also hope that Indians were still capable of rising to great heights if they were properly guided and given an idea of a proper estimate of human values.

To the graduates of the Patna University I have a question to put. I want to know how many among you aspire to the pinnaces of the future India which

is taking its place among the nations of the world. How many of you have the noble ambition of being the greatest among men on earth like the great scientists and thinkers in other lands? How many among you think of taking a place among the first ten? If the country has such men then the future of an independent free India is assured.

India is now on the threshold of freedom and the days of conferences, meetings, processions and slogans are gone. Mere love of the country will not help the country now. What India needs for her progress at present is bands of trained constructive workers in every walk of life. I have been receiving for some time past quite a large number of applications for diplomatic posts in foreign lands. None of these candidates has any idea of the job he would be required to do. Yet they are applicants for the posts merely because they claim to be patriots and have been in some foreign countries. They forget that in order to be a member of the Diplomatic Service they must have a lot of training, because only trained people can get such important jobs. Similarly in every walk of life we need not merely patriots, but men and women who have also other qualifications and training for advancing the cause of the country. India is turning a new page in her history and she requires men and women with lofty ideals and skilled in all arts and sciences to make her a glorious one.

I wanted something along the lines of the Scientific Man Power Committee of England[4] to think out plans for raising India's wealth. The nation as a whole led by scientists and thinkers must cease to think in terms of communal warfare and get down to higher work.

I appeal to the graduates of the Patna University and say that you have the freedom to disagree with me and even oppose me but what I want you to do is to think of the country's greatness above everything else. Whether Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Parsis we all have to live in this land.

4. A committee of leading scientists, appointed on 29 November 1945 to consider policies for the use and development of Britain's scientific manpower and resources for ten years. The Government of India appointed a similar Scientific Man-Power Committee in April 1947, with Shafaat Ahmed Khan as Chairman.

9. To C. Rajagopalachari[1]

New Delhi
30th January 1947

My dear Rajaji,

Reports have reached us from the United States of America and Canada that some of the students we have recently sent out for industrial training have been indulging in virulent communal propaganda. They have been attacking the Interim Government, the Constituent Assembly and many of our activities. It seems to me highly improper that Government of India scholars should indulge in this kind of activity. I do not quite know what can be done in this matter. I should like you to think over it. I shall, of course, draw the attention of our new Ambassador in the United States to this undesirable development.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 17(5)/47-PMS.

10. To Abul Kalam Azad[1]

New Delhi
31 January 1947

My dear Maulana,

You asked me yesterday for names for a committee to consider the question of sending Indian students abroad. As you know there has been considerable dissatisfaction both in regard to the choice of these students and the arrangements made for their study abroad. English and American universities are over-full of men returning from the Armed Forces and it is difficult to get admission to good universities. The result has been that many of our students have had to wait long and then have joined second-rate universities which do not provide any very special training.

2. I think that we should not send any person abroad who can get the training he wants or is capable of absorbing in India. It is far better to start training establishments in India or to expand those already existing than to send a few students abroad.

1. J.N. Collection.

3. Those who go abroad should be specially selected for specific purposes connected with our industrial and technical development. They might even be chosen with a view to helping some of the big projects we have in hand. With this end in view persons with some experience should be chosen so that they might specialize in a particular subject in a year or six months and come back to take charge of the work in hand or help in training others in India. No hard and fast line can be drawn, but generally speaking the choice should be made on the principle indicated above.

4. Our urgent need is for technicians, statisticians, engineers, etc. Higher training in some of these subjects cannot easily be obtained in India. If we send more or less junior students abroad, they waste much of their time in learning things there which they can learn here. We cannot take advantage of their services for a considerable time and our immediate needs are not met. I do not think it is necessary to send any student abroad on behalf of Government for what might be called literary studies, important as these are. There are plenty of individuals who go privately for these studies and Government should, therefore, concentrate on choosing its scholars for specific industrial, scientific or technical training which we lack so much.

5. It is desirable, therefore, that the Committee you constitute should consist of men acquainted with scientific and technical training. I am suggesting four names for your consideration. All four are good and have taken special interest in technical and scientific education. These four names are: Prof. M.N. Saha, F.R.S., Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis, F.R.S., Dr. Homi Bhabha, F.R.S., and Colonel Sir S.S. Sokhey.[2]

6. Mahalanobis is at present, I believe, in America, but he is likely to come back before long.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Major-General Sahib Singh Sokhey (1887-1971); joined Indian Medical Service, 1913; Director, Haffkine Institute, Bombay, 1932-49; Assistant Director-General, World Health Organization, 1950-52; nominated member of Rajya Sabha, 1952-56; awarded International Lenin Peace Prize, 1953.

9

THE ROAD AHEAD

WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN, N.W.F.P., OCTOBER 1946

IN THE N.W.F.P., OCTOBER 1946

1. Cable to India League, America[1]

Our first task is the establishment of a free and democratic India, the raising of the standard of the masses and participation in international conferences for peace and freedom everywhere.

1. *The Hindu*, 13 September 1946.

2. The Tasks of the Interim Government[1]

Jai Hind! Friends, directed by the Congress Working Committee we have accepted office today in the Indian Interim Government and want your full cooperation.[2] We enter on this enterprise in order to achieve our objective, that is, the complete and full independence of India. We propose to function as a corporate whole, as a Cabinet discussing not only our own individual departmental affairs but discussing all important matters together and coming to joint decisions with joint responsibility.

If we are cooperating with those whom we have opposed all along in Government, much more so inevitably do we seek the cooperation of every Indian in this country because after all the foreign elements in this country are temporary residents here or are temporarily in office. Inevitably they have to go, not physically—they are welcome to stay on in India—but in their official capacity, because obviously India is going to be run by Indians for the benefit of Indians, not to the injury of others, I hope, anywhere, but certainly for the benefit primarily of the people who live in this country, to whatever religion or creed they may belong, in whatever province or part of India they may live.

1. An informal talk with press correspondents, New Delhi, 2 September 1946. From *The Hindustan Times* and the *National Herald*, 3 September, and *The Hindu* and *Hindusthan Standard*, 4 September 1946.
2. The Interim Government was sworn in on 2 September 1946 and Nehru became Vice-President of the reconstituted Executive Council of the Viceroy. Nehru took charge of the portfolios of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. Along with him Vallabhbhai Patel—Home, including Information & Broadcasting, Asaf Ali—Communications, Rajendra Prasad—Agriculture & Food, Jagjivan Ram—Labour, Syed Ali Zaheer—Legislative, Posts & Air, Sarat Chandra Bose—Works, Mines & Power were also sworn in.

I hope that the practice of giving titles in India will cease. It has always seemed to me rather degrading that one should have titles attached to his name unless of course they represent some kind of literary excellence or some professional qualification. That is a different thing but otherwise this business of titles is a relic of an age which, I hope, the world is rapidly leaving behind. So whether you call us 'Honourables' or not, the fact is that we shall consider ourselves chief servants of the Indian people and the moment we forget that we shall not be worthy of the job that has been given to us.

We shall keep our eyes and ears close to the soil of India to see not only how the people living in the big houses in New Delhi feel about anything but how the villagers and factory workers see everything.

We must have a practical outlook. What are we aiming at? freedom?—yes; higher standards?—yes. But we are ultimately aiming at feeding, clothing, housing, educating and providing better sanitary and health conditions for four hundred millions, although freedom is our highest objective. If you approach it in that concrete way, the problem becomes a little more concrete, even though it is vast. Then you can limit it, if you like, to what you can do in five years' or ten years' time and put definite objectives. We must produce so much food, clothing, provide so much education and housing etc., because we cannot achieve everything simply because there is a change in Government or simply because we desire it.

Many of my colleagues have not been able to come to Delhi to take charge of their respective portfolios partly owing to illness, and partly owing to other reasons. The result has been, as far as I am concerned, rather odd. I cannot announce the Cabinet's policies and programme, because all the Members have not yet gathered in Delhi. The programme will have to be fashioned by us collectively. Normally I have been charged with External Affairs Department and the Commonwealth Relations Department—the two joined together. But for the moment, may be for ten days or so, I am supposed to be in charge of all the other departments of my absent colleagues, namely the portfolios of Defence, Finance—of which I know hardly anything at all—Commerce, Health, Education, Industries and Supply. A queer collection! Today we started off in the Finance Member's room and for a space of ten or fifteen minutes I discussed high finance. I went on to the Commonwealth Relations Department where we discussed Commonwealth affairs.

Later in the afternoon I went to the External Affairs Department and spent an instructive hour there and then I finally wound up with the Defence Department and tried to understand the various branches of the war establishment in India. So I have had a varied education today and in the course of the next day or two I hope to tackle Health, Education, Commerce, Industries and Supplies. Obviously this is more for my own education than for anything else.

In the main, my job is going to be External Affairs and Commonwealth Affairs. As I was just saying in Hindustani we propose to function very much as a cabinet responsible as a whole for everything that we do. The practice so far here has been for various departments to function separately and reporting directly to the Viceroy and sometimes, when some conflict arose, or some matter had to be considered together, the matter was referred to the Viceroy's council, but normally they were separate departments.

It is a situation fraught with difficulties and humour. Of course it is an odd situation and it has its difficult as well as humorous aspects when a group of persons representing a revolutionary tradition and dynamic organisation, representing thus far the permanent opposition in India which often took to methods of combating the permanent Government of India, come into close touch on a cooperative basis with a static organisation which has not been known in the past to move so rapidly as to make its movement very perceptible to outside observers. The human element is unpredictable. Nevertheless, we have entered into this business with every desire to further it cooperatively in order to achieve our objective—the complete and full independence of India. It will be a very great achievement in itself and also in the manner of doing it if we can do it peacefully and cooperatively. What will happen the future will show but it is because we believe in it that we have undertaken this task and we hope to proceed on those lines.

We require the cooperation of every Indian in this country. We are all going to remain here and even though we may get irritated with each other, it is obvious we have to live together and we have to work together and cooperate together. Therefore, it becomes incumbent on all of us to seek that wider cooperation and make every effort to achieve it because, after all, the problems before us are so vast and intricate, even apart from that major and dominating and primary problem of achieving Indian independence. The other problems—call them economic if you like—are allied problems, tremendous in their significance, i.e., how to raise the standard of living of four hundred millions. Therefore, it is from the point of view not only of the theoretical objective but the practical objective in terms of the millions of human beings in India that we have to look at these problems.

Naturally, in the future we shall have to have close contact with the press, because we have to live in close contact with our people. We shall go to them as we have gone to them in the past so much, and meet them face to face at public gatherings. Perhaps some of us may not have quite so much time for that in future. Nevertheless, we shall have to go to report to them because they are our masters and we are their servants though you might add some appellation like 'honourable' to our names.

I do not know what effect a fairly lengthy residence in New Delhi might have upon us because it has been my experience that it has a very numbing effect on individuals, and results in a weakening of their intellectual faculties

and certainly their physical faculties. May be, we might be affected that way, but I hope not. New Delhi, as it has been constituted thus far, is something unique in India and something entirely apart from India. It does not represent India although it contains many eminent Indians.

How far it is possible to change this atmosphere of New Delhi and bring it more into line and more into touch with the real Indian atmosphere I do not know, and it is up to all of us to try to do so.

Anyhow, whether New Delhi changes or not, we have to think in terms larger than New Delhi, of the towns and the factories and the market places of India. If we are to be a popular Government we have to carry the people with us. We cannot function even for their good without the goodwill of the people. Therefore, it becomes essential for us to keep in touch with them through the press, personally and otherwise. It may be that we might have recourse to broadcasting. Certainly we will, but unfortunately the radio is not sufficiently developed here. There are relatively very few listeners and the listeners are normally newspaper readers. Nevertheless we should take advantage of every avenue of approach to our people and sometimes, it may be, to the wider public of the world.

3. Free India's Role in World Affairs[1]

Friends and comrades, *Jai Hind!*

Six days ago my colleagues and I sat on the chairs of high office in the Government of India. A new government came into being in this ancient land, the Interim or Provisional Government we called it, the stepping stone to the full independence of India. Many thousands of messages of greeting and good wishes came to me from all parts of the world and from every nook and corner of India. And yet we asked for no celebration of this historic event and even restrained our people's enthusiasm. For we wanted them to realise that we were yet on the march and the goal had still to be reached. There were many difficulties and obstacles on the way and our journey's end might not be so near as people thought. Any weakness now, any complacency would be fatal to our cause.

1. First broadcast over All India Radio as Vice-President of the Interim Government, 7 September 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 8 September and *The Hindu*, 9 September 1946.

Our hearts were heavy also with the terrible tragedy of Calcutta and because of the insensate strife of brother against brother. The freedom we had envisaged and for which we had laboured through generations of trial and suffering was for all the people of India, and not for one group or class or the followers of one religion. We aimed at a cooperative commonwealth in which all would be equal sharers in opportunity and in all the things that give meaning and value to life. Why then this strife, this fear and suspicion of each other?

I speak to you today not much of high policy or our programme for the future—that will have to wait a while—but to thank you for the love and affection which you have sent us in such abundant measure. That affection and spirit of cooperation are always welcome but they will be needed more than ever in the difficult days ahead of us. A friend sent me the following message: "May you weather every storm, first pilot of the ship of State. *Bon voyage*". A cheering message but there are many storms ahead and our ship of State is old and battered and slow-moving and unsuited to this age of swift change; it will have to be scrapped and give place to another. But however old the ship and however old the pilot, when there are so many millions of willing hearts and hands to help, we can brave the high seas and face the future with confidence.

That future is already taking shape and India, this old and dear land of ours, is finding herself again through travail and suffering. She is youthful again with the bright eyes of adventure, and with faith in herself and her mission. For long years she had been narrowly confined and had lost herself in brooding. But now she looks out on the wide world and holds out her hands in friendship to the other peoples of the world even though that world may still be full of conflict and thoughts of war.

The Interim National Government is part of a larger scheme which includes the Constituent Assembly which will meet soon to give shape to the constitution of a free and independent India. It is because of this expectation of an early realisation of full independence that we have entered this Government, and we propose to function so as progressively to achieve that independence in action both in our domestic affairs and our foreign relations. We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation. We hope to develop close and direct contacts with other nations and to cooperate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom.

We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale. We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war. We are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent coun-

tries and peoples, and in the recognition in theory and practice of equal opportunities for all peoples. We repudiate utterly the Nazi doctrine of racialism, wheresoever and in whatever form it may be practised. We seek no dominion over others and we claim no privileged position over other peoples. But we do claim equal and honourable treatment for our people wherever they may go, and we cannot accept any discrimination against them.

The world, in spite of its rivalries and hatreds and inner conflicts, moves inevitably towards closer cooperation and the building up of a world commonwealth. It is for this one world that free India will work, a world in which there is free cooperation of free peoples and no class or group exploits another.

In spite of our past history of conflict, we hope that an independent India will have friendly and cooperative relations with England and the countries of the British Commonwealth. But it is well to remember what is happening in one part of the Commonwealth today. In South Africa racialism is the State doctrine and our people are putting up a heroic struggle against the tyranny of a racial minority.[2] If this racial doctrine is going to be tolerated, it must inevitably lead to vast conflicts and world disasters.

We send our greetings to the people of the United States of America to whom destiny has given a major role in international affairs. We trust that this tremendous responsibility will be utilised for the furtherance of peace and human freedom everywhere. To that other great nation of the modern world, the Soviet Union, which also carries a vast responsibility for shaping world events, we send greetings. They are our neighbour in Asia and inevitably we shall have to undertake many common tasks and have much to do with each other.

We are of Asia and the peoples of Asia are nearer and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of western, southern and south-east Asia. In the past, her culture flowed to all these countries and they came to her in many ways. Those contacts are being renewed and the future is bound to see a closer union between India and south-east Asia on the one side, and Afghanistan, Iran and the Arab world on the west. To the furtherance of that close association of free countries we must devote ourselves. India has followed with anxious interest the struggle of the Indonesians for freedom[3] and to them we send our good wishes.

2. Indians in South Africa had begun a passive resistance movement in June 1946 in protest against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, 1946, which sought to restrict acquisition and occupation of land by Asians in the Natal and Transvaal provinces and denied Indians the right to be elected to either House of the Union Parliament.
3. The nationalists, under the leadership of Soekarno, who had proclaimed the independence of Indonesia in August 1945 following Japan's surrender, were resisting reoccupation of the country by the Dutch authorities.

China, that mighty country with a mighty past, our neighbour, has been our friend through the ages and that friendship will endure and grow. We earnestly hope that her present troubles[4] will end soon and a united and democratic China will emerge, playing a great part in the furtherance of world peace and progress.

I have not said anything about our domestic policy, nor at this stage do I wish to do so. But that policy will inevitably have to be governed by the principles by which we have stood all these years. We shall look to the common and forgotten man in India and seek to bring him relief and raise his standard of living. We shall continue our fight against the curse of untouchability and other forms of enforced inequality, and shall especially try to help those who are economically or otherwise backward. Today millions lack food and clothing and houses, and many are on the verge of starvation. To meet this immediate need is an urgent and difficult task and we hope other countries will help us by sending foodgrains.

An equally urgent and vital task for us is to conquer the spirit of discord that is abroad in India. Out of mutual conflict we shall never build the house of India's freedom of which we have dreamt so long. All of us in this land have to live and work together, whatever political developments might take place. Hatred and violence will not alter this basic fact; nor will they stop the changes that are taking place in India.

There has been much heated argument about sections and groupings in the Constituent Assembly. We are perfectly prepared to, and we have accepted, the position of sitting in sections, which will consider the question of formation of groups. I should like to make it clear, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, that we do not look upon the Constituent Assembly as an arena for conflict or for the forcible imposition of one viewpoint over another. That would not be the way to build up a contented and united India. We seek agreed and integrated solutions with the largest measure of goodwill behind them. We shall go to the Constituent Assembly with the fixed determination of finding a common basis for agreement on all controversial issues. And so, in spite of all that has happened and the hard words that have been said, we have kept the path of cooperation open, and we invite even those who differ from us to enter the Constituent Assembly as equals and partners with us with no binding commitments. It may well be that when we meet and face common tasks our present difficulties will fade away.

India is on the move and the old order passes. Too long have we been passive spectators of events, the playthings of others. The initiative comes to our people now and we shall make the history of our choice. Let us all join in this mighty task and make of India the pride of our heart, great among nations, foremost in the arts of peace and progress. The door is open and

4. The Communists and the Kuomintang were waging a civil war.

destiny beckons to all. There is no question of who wins and who loses, for we have to go forward and together as comrades and either all of us win or we all go down together. But there is going to be no failure. We go forward to success, to independence and to the freedom and well-being of the four hundred millions of India. *Jai Hind.*

4. To Harekrushna Mahtab[1]

New Delhi
16th September 1946

My dear Mahtab,

I have your demi-official letter of the 7th September.[2] I have heard of the Mahanadi Valley Project and naturally I am interested in it. It is a very big scheme involving an area which is bigger than the Tennessee Valley in the U.S.A. I have no doubt that such schemes have to be started in various parts of India if we are to make rapid progress. But naturally I can express no opinion about the technical or financial aspects of a scheme of this kind. That is more or less for experts.

It is natural for the villagers concerned to object to be pushed out. The way to approach them should be first of all to do propaganda pointing out in simple language the great benefits that the people of the whole area will derive from the Project. In this way you can create public opinion. Small pamphlets might be issued pointing out what has been done by other schemes like the T.V.A. and giving some indication of the conditions that will prevail in Orissa when this Project is functioning. Secondly every effort should be made to accommodate the people who are dispossessed. Merely giving compensation is not always enough. Some place is to be found for these people to live and work.

Two days ago I had a visit from two of your M.L.A.s, one from Sambalpur, who apparently are the persons referred to in your letter. I told them that some such scheme has to be accepted. Of course after proper scrutiny. If necessary the present scheme can be reviewed by technical experts with a fresh viewpoint. But it is impossible for Orissa to go ahead without large schemes of this kind.

1. File No. 17(46)/56-PMS.
2. Mahtab had sought Nehru's help in executing the Mahanadi Valley Project and drawn attention to an agitation against the proposed dam, as the project entailed displacement of 200 villages.

It is obvious that the poor province of Orissa cannot carry out such a scheme without Government of India's help. We will give that help though exactly in what measure I cannot say at present. I am prepared to do what I can to help you in this matter both in the Government and before the public. But the time for this will be a little later when I know more about the scheme.

As a matter of fact I look upon all such projects as part of the larger scheme of planning for the whole of India. I hope that we might be able to set up some machinery for planning. Meanwhile I suggest to you to have the scheme properly vetted by competent authority and at the same time approach your public in the way I have suggested above.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. The British Conservative Attitude[1]

Certain speeches delivered at the British Conservative Party's Conference held at Blackpool[2] indicate a hostile attitude on the part of some leading members of the Party towards the Interim Government of India. These speeches are irresponsible, full of malice and calculated to stir up strife and prevent unity and settled government in India. A charge has been made that I am silent about the withdrawal of British troops from India and that we seek to use them for quelling communal disturbances.[3] This charge, as much else in the speeches delivered at Blackpool, is completely false. We do not want to use them for quelling internal disturbances. It was our policy before we took office and it is our policy now to have British troops withdrawn from India immediately or, at any rate, with the greatest possible speed. We do not want them to stay on in India for a day. It is unfair to us and unfair to them to keep them here. I invite the leaders of the British Conservative Party to support us in these demands and help in giving effect to them in the immediate future.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 6 October 1946. *The Hindu*, 8 October 1946.
2. At the Conference held from 3 to 5 October 1946, Earl Winterton, Capt. L.D. Gammans and R.A. Butler, speaking on Winterton's resolution that "in any settlement which might be proposed the rights of minorities and of the Indian States should be effectively safeguarded", had criticised the Congress and sympathised with the Muslim League.
3. This charge was made by Earl Winterton.

While we have expressed our willingness to cooperate with the United Kingdom, I want to make it perfectly clear on behalf of myself and my colleagues in the Government of India that there will be no cooperation with those who adopt an unfriendly attitude towards us or trifle with the independence of India.

6. To K.T. Shah[1]

New Delhi
9 October 1946

My dear Shah,

I received your letter with a note on the sterling balances a few days ago. I have just received your letter of the 8th October. Moon will be writing to you on the subject. We have appointed a temporary Central Planning Board with five or six non-officials and about an equal number of officials. You and Moon will be members and joint secretaries.

The idea is that you two might meet for a week and prepare all the ground for the Board; then the full Board meets for a week, goes over your papers and notes, lays down certain general directives and appoints a sub-committee. This sub-committee functions for a month or so and prepares a report. The full Board meets again for a week or ten days or more and makes its final recommendations.

It was not considered desirable for Members of the Cabinet to be members of this Planning Board. But Matthai and I hope to take informal part in the preliminary talks.

I should like all this work to be completed, if possible, by Christmas time so that the Cabinet can consider it early in January and come to decisions which should include a scheme for permanent planning.

I agree with you that the Planning Committee should meet at least once. I think we should call it some time later in Delhi, probably in November. We can discuss this matter when we meet.

It seems to me worthwhile for our sub-committee reports, or such of them as are in a fit condition, to be published immediately. This should have a note attached to them that they were prepared some time back. In spite of their being somewhat out-of-date, they are very useful and I am sure there will be a demand for them. Plenty of publishers will gladly take them up.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

7. The Basic Problem of Health[1]

Health is a basic problem which forms the foundation of a nation's edifice and if the foundation is weak, the building is likely to collapse.

Various questions are facing the country, some of which are controversial. But others are basic problems, health being one of them. Political and other matters may brook some delay, but not problems like health, which if not given proper attention to in time cannot be rectified. Hitherto, not much attention has been paid by the State to problems like health and education. Lack of funds is the explanation.

If funds can be available for big wars, there is no reason why they should not be provided for to fight against ill-health, which is like the enemy from within and weakens the nation. No doubt it is a gigantic task but it is one of those urgent questions which have got to be attended to, if we want to avoid situation like the aftermath of the Bengal famine.

So far more attention has been paid to the towns, whereas India lives in the villages. The producer of the country's wealth should be physically strong and expenditure on him should not be grudged. It is necessary to concentrate on preventive health measures rather than on huge buildings for hospitals.

I want to make it clear that there is no intention on the part of the Centre to compel the provinces to adopt a particular policy. They are free to chalk out their own measures, but in matters like health cooperation of all the provinces and the Centre is essential. In fact, it is really a matter of international cooperation; for, with modern transport, there is always a danger of disease spreading from one part of the world to another. Inside the country itself, if one part is in a bad state, it affects the other parts as well.

I hope that the mutual discussions which the Health Ministers are going to have on health problems will prove beneficial to the country.

1. Inaugural address at the Health Ministers Conference, New Delhi, 10 October 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 11 October and *The Hindu*, 12 October 1946.

8. The Armed Forces in the New Perspective[1]

The Indian army has in the past been largely cut off from the people. Between the two there have been barriers, and the sense of unity which should prevail between the army and the civilian population has been absent. The Indian army has been recognized by everyone to be one of the finest armies in the world and all Indians have taken pride in its achievements.

Nevertheless, there has continued that barrier between the civilian population and the armed forces of the country. Because of this the best young men in India have not offered themselves for commissions in sufficient numbers. It has been found necessary to reject a high percentage of candidates recently because they did not possess the qualities necessary for leadership in the army or the navy or the air force.

In the changing circumstances of today, when a national Government is at the helm of affairs and India is on the eve of freedom, the whole attitude to the armed forces must necessarily change. The army must be treated like, and must become, a real national army and all barriers between the armed forces and the civilian population must disappear.

India believes in peaceful progress for the world and her efforts will be directed towards the ending of war. But till a great change takes place in world affairs and in the international situation, the defence of the country from the possibility of external aggression must be a paramount duty of the Government, and for this purpose, the armed forces will be necessary. Those armed forces, whether they form part of the army or the navy or the air force, must be maintained at the highest level of quality and efficiency.

A national army and navy and air force must be officered by the nationals of the country. It is essential that these officers should be of the highest calibre. The Interim Government regard it as a matter of supreme national importance that the armed forces should be completely nationalized and maintained at the highest level of efficiency. They consider it also essential that the armed forces should not be affected by party politics.

We would appeal, therefore, to the people of India, of all parties and communities, to make the armed forces their own and to encourage the best young men in the country to apply for commissions in these forces. In this national work, the cooperation of all our people is necessary so that the armed forces of India should represent the best in India and should be the true soldiers of free India.

1. Joint appeal to the people of India by Nehru and Baldev Singh, New Delhi, 22 November 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 23 November 1946.

9. An Integrated View of India's Problems[1]

Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,
As I enter this Hall, I remember that more than eight years have passed since I last came to address a meeting here. My mind goes back to my various visits to Britain and to London where I came ages ago as a little boy to go to school.

Then I went to college and in later years came here several times in different capacities. Then I thought that tonight I have come in a different guise and in a different capacity.

How far have I changed in that period?—I suppose I have changed a lot now. Others are better judges than myself. But the fact that I have come on this occasion as a Member of the Government of India may appear important to others. But so far as I am aware, it makes no difference to me in the sense that what I stood for and worked and laboured for previously remains the same, whether I represent the Government of India or not.

It is true that as one gets closer to reality, then only one sees the difficulties which one had not observed previously or to which importance had not been attached.

Even in these three months I have been associated with the Government of India, I have found many things that I knew existed there and many new aspects of these things, which I did not sufficiently realise previously. All manner of new problems and new difficulties rise up continually. At the same time, I do not wish you to imagine that because of these problems and difficulties any of us ever loses sight of what we have been striving for or desires to divert all our attention from the main problem before us.

I have come to believe, more than ever, that there can be no solution of the Indian problem unless two things happen. One is—and I was glad Sardar Baldev Singh emphasized what I am going to say—that there can be no true solution in India of even our domestic problems unless these problems are left entirely and completely to ourselves and, secondly, unless it embraces al economic as well as political problems. So long as there is any intrusion or interference by others, even if it may be well meant, it becomes difficult to solve the problem.

Inevitably, the reality that we have to face is covered up by that external interference. The attention is diverted and many people look not to facts there which we have to face but to other quarters. Therefore, one of the first

1. Speech at a reception given by the India League at Kingsway Hall, London, 4 December 1946. From *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times*, 6 December 1946.

essentials for a true solution and approach to the solution is that the people of India should know and feel that the whole burden of the solution is on them and if they fail, then the consequences will be borne by them. That introduces a measure of reality into the picture.

The second point that I think is fundamental is this—the Indian problem long ceased to be a purely political problem between India and England. Of course, it is a political problem, but it is not only a political problem, and today we have to face in India—we have faced it for long but now more so than ever—all manner of economic problems, all manner of problems affecting the masses of India.

Any attempt at a solution on political lines, which does not solve, or go a long way in solving, these economic problems will necessarily meet with failure. So we have to think in terms of producing a solution which not only makes India politically independent but also more or less at the same time or soon after helps in raising the standard of living of 400 million Indians.

Vaguely for all these years we thought in those terms but the time has approached—has come—when this vagueness has to give place to more definite approaches. It is not merely a question of my desire to do so or somebody else wanting to do so but circumstances compel us to do so and if we, in our preoccupation with politics, fail to understand these circumstances, not only do we invite disaster, but possibly even the political problem is not properly solved. So it becomes rather complicated, as every question in the world is complicated, because of this interaction of these factors.

I do not think that it will be right of me to speak to you tonight on any special subject, much less on the immediate cause of my coming to Britain.

But when you do me the honour of coming here to meet me and welcome me and when I can see so many friendly faces, many of which I recognise and others I may not know, I am drawn towards you. I should like to say so many things to you, and to hear many things from you, because we meet tonight after so many years of abnormal significance—years which are producing big revolutionary changes in the world and in India.

My own particular difficulty in India has been that, unfortunately, while these vast changes are in the air, the attention of many of my countrymen is restricted to, what I consider in this larger context, relatively petty conflicts —internal conflicts—which are our misfortune.

We may blame others for that, and others may well have a share in accentuating these conflicts, but, nevertheless, it seems a poor thing to go on blaming others for our failings. It is our failing and in the measure that we get over that failing are we likely to succeed.

India has potentialities to become a great power but a divided India would fall a prey to outside intervention and exploitation. No Indian should say something to hurt the feelings of a brother Indian and thus help to create divisions among themselves.

We should settle our political and economic problems in such a way that everybody should be happy. Our aim is to remove poverty of our masses. That is real freedom. There is no meaning of freedom for hungry men.

In the course of her struggle for freedom, India had suffered greatly. Now it is a new type of difficulty. The old type is still there, no doubt, but the new type has been added to it which is going to test us and test us to the utmost. It is difficult for me or anyone to go about assuring others of his *bona fides*. Either you accept one's *bona fides* or do not. But there is such a thing as a record of the movement.

I referred to the record of the Indian national movement. That movement, as any big movement, has comprised within its folds all manner of folk, good, bad and indifferent. Still I think it is true to say that the movement has not only kept high ideals before it—high ideals not only in the larger sense of group-working, but even in a personal sense—and in spite of the failure to reach always all these ideals, it has always looked up to them and tried to work in accordance with them. I do not wish to compare with what has happened in other countries, because conditions differ in every country and it is difficult, but I think it is true to say that we have deliberately attached considerable importance to means, not because of any theoretical or philosophical preferences, but because we realise that when we pursue wrong means, the ends are quite distorted and therefore, in fact, the ends change.

We have tried to follow that and you may imagine the feelings of those who have worked a long stretch of years and dreamed not only of a free India in the political sense but also of an India where hundreds of millions of people can raise themselves to really human relations, when we find this jealousy and conflict and bitterness and bickering going on about small things.

I want to refer here to newspaper descriptions of representatives of the Congress, Sikhs and Muslims and I must say that it is not pleasant to hear them. I may remind my hearers that our conception of India is not narrowly national or nationalistic but is something which fits in properly in the higher international context.

I do not know what the outcome of the immediate situation will be, though I have no doubt that we shall get over these difficulties sooner or later, not in a purely political sense—which often happens of some arrangements here and there—I am referring to the deeper causes of these difficulties, which, if they remain, continue to produce new conflicts. We want to remove these causes not only nationally but also internationally and seek out and try to build a new society. I have come here for a brief time. What good my visit may have done, I do not know. But certainly it has done good to me to come to some of the old haunts of my many bright friends and see young British faces, and to carry back with me all your friendship and welcome.

10. Free India in a Free World[1]

Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,
I arrived in England only day before yesterday and now a few hours later the gathering appears to me to be a farewell gathering for I am leaving after one more day. These two or three days I have been here have been very full, days occupied with all manner of interviews and talks and committees, but probably the most lasting impression that I will carry away will be that of many friends—my own countrymen and others—whom I have met.

When in far off countries, it cheers one up much more to know that, spread out in the various corners of the world, there are people who feel more or less the same way and who are helpers in the common cause. When there are difficulties, one is heartened and cheered by this thought.

For this reason, if for no other, my very brief visit to England has been very much worthwhile. And I shall go back from here not only with very pleasant memories but greatly heartened to face the difficult tasks ahead of us in India.

These tasks are difficult of course and it would be folly to minimise these difficulties. At the same time it would be a greater folly to exaggerate them or to feel rather overwhelmed by them; that, of course, does not help at any time. For my part, I can tell you quite honestly that I think that I have no sense of being overwhelmed by any difficulty in India.

Certainly, I have a sense of bearing heavy responsibility when the decisions we make can make a difference to large numbers of people. That is always a tremendous responsibility. That responsibility would, indeed, be impossible to bear if it was an individual responsibility. But when one shares it with others, not only those few who might be intimately associated in that responsibility but with vast numbers of other comrades who work for the same cause, then the burden is shared and spread out and does not become so heavy. On such occasions, it becomes impossible for all of us to remain as calm-eyed and cool-headed as possible. That, of course, is desirable on all occasions, the more so when apparently difficulty faces one. I find some people worried, and some of the questions they put to me appear to indicate a state of mind which does not denote any clear-headedness. One is apt to feel frightened by the particular difficulty of the moment.

Naturally, the moment counts and we have to face that moment then.

1. Speech at a reception at India House, London, organised by the Indian Association Institute on 5 December 1946. From *National Herald, The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times*, 7 December 1946.

If anything has been obvious in India for some time and today, it is this: that vast forces are at work. India, for a large number of years, had been more or less what I may call a static country. For some time it stopped growing. With an individual, so also with the nation, a static condition is not a healthy condition.

Whatever the reason may be, however, there is a change, and anybody with a good perspective, with eyes or ears to see and hear, can see that India today, with all its virtues and failings, is tremendously dynamic. That is, today India is full of life. Now, if a country is dynamic, that energy may go into the right channel or a wrong channel—that is a separate question. But the first requirement is that you should have that energy or life because something which is dead or approaching death is not much good.

India is a living, throbbing, dynamic, vital nation today.

It is true that some of that energy and life sometimes flows into wrong channels. Today, we have to check that—divert that current. Nevertheless the fundamental thing is that it is the life that is there, that brought about a tremendous change in the Indian scene in the past few years. The change has not been sudden. It has been gradual, but it is there for you to see and, if you look at it from any point of view—political, social or economic—you will see these signs of a great force, restrained for so long, trying to burst its chains, spread out and go ahead. I have no doubt in my mind that, as soon as we get thoroughly going as an independent country, we shall go ahead at a very fast pace.

So we need not be frightened or overwhelmed by the problems or difficulties of today. At the same time we must tackle them, of course, not just in the spirit of anger, of spite and passion—that does not help—but by trying to understand them and by keeping to the principles and ideals we have had always in view. Obviously, all that life and dynamic energy would be frustrated and wasted if it were spent in mutual conflict. We can do nothing big if we spend our time and energy in these bickerings and conflicts. We have to deal with this matter and we have to realise that India can only be big and great if it views this problem in a large way, not in a narrow or sectarian way.

It is impossible, I think, for India to be the country I would like it to be if any one group in India, whether religious or other, tries to dominate any other group. The conception of Indian freedom that we have always had and spoken about has been one of equal freedom and equal opportunity for every one of the 400 millions of India.

Indeed, it is an even larger conception because our nationalism, unlike many other nationalisms, is closely allied with internationalism. We have not thought in the past and we do not propose to think in future in terms of any kind of aggression on any other country.

Although it may appear odd for me even to refer to aggression, when India herself is not a free country, the fact remains that India is powerful and

dynamic enough to go in for aggression, if she chooses.

Not today, of course, but when I say we have deliberately given up the idea of aggression, it is not a pious platitude I am uttering. We have come to the conclusion that that kind of aggression is neither good for India nor for any other country nor for the world. We, therefore, want to fit in our nationalism and national freedom with internationalism and international freedom.

Therefore, from now onwards we want to develop international relations with other countries on a friendly and cooperative basis, always keeping in view the ideals that have moved us in the past years.

Finally, I would like to mention that this gathering is at the instance of the Indian Association Institute, which has been recently formed into a body. I remember that when I was in England previously I had remarked to friends on the absence of such an institute or organisation in London. I think that where there are Indians, there should be some such institutes, especially in a great city like London.

When I heard some few months back in India of this institute being formed, I was delighted and did a thing which normally I do not do—I was weak enough to consent to become its president. I did not know that the organisation would grow or what shape it would take, but I knew the ideal was good and the foundations appeared well and truly laid. What the future will be depends ultimately, to some extent, on the organisers—those who started it—but much more depends on a large number of others such as compose the audience. This is not a thing which depends upon a few persons—its success depends upon the cooperation of many, and I hope that those present and others in India will cooperate to make it a success. In doing so, they will be doing not a noble act for others, but good to themselves. Therefore I have gladly associated myself with it.

11. A Call for Unity and Cooperation[1]

Thank you very much for the reception you have given me. You know that we are at present at the threshold of Swaraj. At such a time we are facing a number of obstacles and difficulties. We have to remove them in order to attain complete Swaraj. It is very important that everybody should unite

1. Speech at Babatpur aerodrome, Varanasi, 15 December 1946. From *National Herald* and *The Hindu*, 16 December 1946.

because the kind of work that we are doing must be done in a peaceful atmosphere.

In Delhi the Constituent Assembly has been sitting for nearly a week now. Its President is Dr. Rajendra Prasad. The Assembly is to draft India's constitution. We want that the Assembly to make the constitution of a government in which every community and every minority should participate. The Constituent Assembly is facing certain difficulties and more difficulties will crop up later. Therefore, at a period like this, it is imperative that there should be unity in India so that those who attempt to hinder progress should be prevented from carrying out their designs.

You have taken a great part in the national movement in the past. But now that the actual time for attaining freedom is at hand we want your co-operation and help to an even greater extent than before.

12. Free India and British Commercial Interests[1]

Mr. President[2] and Gentlemen, I am grateful to you for the invitation and for the opportunity you have provided me of meeting you. It was not an easy thing for me to be present in Calcutta at the present moment. But I attached importance to this invitation, I appreciated it, and felt that I should come even at the cost of leaving some other work undone.

We meet here in this way for the first time.[3] And in the past there has been a very deep gulf between us. We have often been on different sides of the barrier or the barricades. Therefore, it is all the more necessary that we should meet and try to understand each other.

Although unfortunately we do not agree on every point, I have no doubt if we do meet each other we would be able to agree on some points, because, after all, we represent different forces, different historical tendencies and all

1. Address to the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India, Calcutta, 16 December 1946. From *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindustan Times* of 17 December 1946 and *The Hindu*, 18 December 1946.
2. Harry Douglas Townend (1891-1976); President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Associated Chambers of Commerce of India, 1946-47; Member, Central Legislative Council, 1946-47; Director and for some time Chairman, R.G. Shaw & Co. Ltd., 1948-70.
3. For the first time since the founding of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India in 1920, its annual general meeting was addressed by an Indian instead of the Viceroy.

manner of new things that are happening in India today as well as all over the world.

But I am concerned more with India. India today is passing through a tremendous period of transition. An old age is coming to an end and a new age is going to begin. Whenever such things happen there is bound to be plenty of upsetting factors and troubles, and if we can get over the change with complete peace that would be good for us.

You know that there have been difficulties at the Paris Peace Conference and at the U.N. General Assembly they have come to grips with the present-day issues. Therefore, it is not odd or unusual that we have conflicts here, and we have clashes.

The point however is that India is today very dynamic in spite of the many ills that you see all around. For a country to be dynamic is good. It is a sign of life and where there is life, there is hope, and more especially after a long, long period of what might broadly be described as a static period. Progress in no period of human life is really static. Nevertheless, India had a slow-moving period. Many things were not only left undone but were prevented from being done.

Suddenly we are faced with a vast accumulation of problems—not merely political—more especially economic. We have to hurry if we want to solve them, but more particularly if we do not solve them they threaten to solve us. Such is the state of India today, possibly of the world. There appears to be a race between the forces of construction and destruction, between forces that tend towards making a better, happier and a stabler world and those rapidly tending towards fresh disasters. You can take all this according to your own temperament.

With this background the problem of India can be seen more closely and in a proper perspective. It is not an isolated problem. If you have strikes in India today you have bigger strikes in more industrially advanced countries of the world. If you have political and economic conflicts in India today you have political and economic conflicts in other parts of the world, at least in a good part of Europe.

You see conflicts between different viewpoints and different ideologies. I wonder how many of you approve of the domestic social policy of the present British Government.[4] Many may not approve of their policy, and yet they are promoting their policy with the goodwill of a large number of the people of England. And if some of us want to have a similar policy in economic and domestic spheres, it is not just that Indians as a whole approve this economic point of view but a large number of Indians want it.

4. The Labour Government in Britain was carrying out a comprehensive programme of economic and social welfare which included nationalisation of certain key industries and implementation of social security schemes.

People talk about capitalism and socialism. You, Mr. President, mentioned about the charge of exploitation and the rest.[5] It is understandable that such a charge would not be welcome. But looking at this matter it is not a question of calling names, calling somebody bad or good. What may be good at one time may be bad in another time.

We see in the relations of England and India a strange historical process, working sometimes more or less to the good and sometimes for the bad. Very probably our approaches are different. Necessarily our conclusions will also be different.

Whenever there is much long contact between two peoples and two countries, there are bound to be good and bad results. We have to balance those things. Inevitably, the Englishman looks upon it from a certain point of view, but the Indian from another, more particularly when two countries come into intimate contact and when there are frequent conflicts.

We need not go into the past so much, except to realise that the Indian viewpoint in regard to these matters is obviously very different from the English point of view; whether you agree or do not, that holds the mind of India and that is going to influence the mind of India unless mental and psychological changes take place.

One thing is obvious—and that is that very soon matters pertaining to India will be decided in India and by Indians. You admit this and the world knows that. There is no other way out of it. We have arrived at a stage when that change-over must be rapid. Some people feel that it should be rapid; others feel that there is danger in the change-over being rapid. The change-over in India cannot be delayed. As a matter of fact, all such change-overs cannot be delayed for the simple reason that if you delay these you would neither be clinging to the old nor to the new—you will remain in a perilous position.

The picture of India today is that by law and constitution she is as much in the same position as before. But, in fact, vast changes have taken place which have undoubtedly nullified in practice the effects of the law and the constitution. There is now a certain amount of vacuum. Unless it is filled properly it tends to be filled improperly. That is where the danger lies : in a slow drawn-out period of transition, especially when there is a background of conflicts as there is in India.

The President of the Chamber in his address has dealt with a number of important matters.[6] And yet in a sense they are relatively minor matters in

5. Townend had taken exception to the word "exploitation" used by Liaquat Ali in the Central Assembly on 12 November 1946 to describe the activities of the British business class in India.
6. Townend had referred to the need for proper housing and sanitation, the increasing strength of provincial barriers to the free movement of commodities, tariff barriers, and the intervention by the Government in industrial and commercial matters.

the larger context. I should like to deal with these matters if I could. My difficulty is, however, for the very reason that we are in a period of transition.

But whatever the period of transition, whether it takes a year or 18 months, one thing is obvious. There is going to be a new independent India, controlled by representatives of the Indian people. What those representatives will do I do not know. Naturally, I shall try to influence things. I may succeed in some cases. I may not in others. I really do not know what will happen when the new forces are released as they are bound to be. These new forces will do what they think proper. It may be that our leadership may be passed aside. So there is this feeling of uncertainty about the future. But that does not frighten me in the least, because I know that is the way a nation grows and in this way India will grow. But unless you have a blueprint for the future you cannot work. One can try to look at this future and try to work in so far as one can.

A blueprint of the future is necessary, but it is difficult to predict the future. He is a brave man who prophesies what will happen in India in a year or two. Because we are in a period of transition nothing can be laid down with certainty. But I myself have not the faintest notion now of what will happen a year or two hence, except this that the present goes and something new comes in.

The President has referred to certain matters like inflation, strikes, controls, etc. Well, in regard to inflation I suppose there can be no two views about its stoppage. Inflation is bad; it should be combated in every possible way. So far as the Government of India is concerned, closest attention has been given to this matter and we have tried to counter it. It is not an easy job. We have tried to keep down the prices of many of the foodstuffs.

I can tell you I do not like this at all because I feel that the cultivator who has had a bad deal in the past should get a good price. Normally, we have thought in terms of towns and cities. Normally, incomes have gone to embellish our cities and towns. Our rural areas have been awfully and dismally neglected. It is one good result that the peasantry have been able to wipe off some of their debts. When they have been slightly better off, many of us began to shout that something should be done to prevent that. I should like them to be more better off. Obviously, the Government would try to meet this danger of inflation so far as it can. It is very earnest in this matter.

Then, about controls. There are controls, war-time controls and extension of war-time controls. We all know that, apart from the intrinsic desirability or otherwise of such controls, they have led to a good deal of corruption both in Government services and outside, among the public. They have encouraged black-marketing. On the other hand, it seems without controls we may lead to further greater dangers.

In the last two months if there had not been a rigid control of the food situation there would have been a terrible famine. But, generally, in the

present situation we cannot do without these controls even at the risk of misuse of these controls. Such war-time controls should, as much as possible, go.

The President in his address has referred to what he calls Governmental interference in commerce and industry. The present-day industry and commerce all over the world are private enterprises. In spite of that there is a very strong tendency all over the world for Governmental interference for the benefit of society, because, after all, the State is the expression of society. Why is it so? There are forces at work of some sort of socialism. In India there might be something in the nature of statutory boards, such as the London underground system had. The State there does not interfere but ultimately it is under State control. Even the British Conservative Party has gone on to some extent in this direction. The fact of the matter is that the whole conception of the State has been changed.

The original conception of the State was probably what might be called a Police State, that is, Government's strict duty was to protect people from external dangers and internal turmoil and the rest was left to the citizens themselves. Government had no function in social and other amenities for the citizens. Gradually, this conception of a Police State changed to that of the social. New Governments indulged in vast schemes of social welfare, education, health, amusement, cultural, industrial and scientific activities. It is all Governmental interference and you accept that.

The President has talked in his address about the horrible conditions of slums and bustees in Indian cities. It is a shame and a scandal the way many of our cities tolerate these slums. You talk of municipalities. Whether it is lighting or watering the streets the State comes in and all this is State interference, because life has become so complex and unless the State intervenes there is bound to be a disaster, economic or otherwise.

Now, in what measure a State will intervene may be a matter of argument. But it is obvious that the State will intervene more increasingly in the future because life has become complex. You must have planned authority otherwise there will be chaos. It is quite impossible for the State not to interfere in trade and commerce. It has interfered in the past and it will interfere more and more in the future.

There is also a great deal of talk of planning. The Government of India till recently had a Planning Department, which had been liquidated about some four months back.[7] I do not know what the then Government of India thought about planning. So far there is no trace of planning. We have a number of projects, hydro-electric schemes, this and that. I believe if the schemes are put into operation, in course of ten years some parts of the

7. This department, created in June 1944 for the coordination of post-war planning and development, was summarily abolished on 4 July 1946, despite extensive protests.

country will be electrified and power resources will increase tremendously. But one of the big scandals of India is the lack of power resources.

There can be no planning without Governmental interference and supervision. I personally hope that even when there is a large measure of Governmental interference there will be a fairly large scope to private enterprise. But the key industries must inevitably be controlled very closely by the State.

Talking of industry as it is in India today sometimes seems to be a misnomer. Most of our so-called industrialists are hardly industrialists. They are in reality financiers; that is not industrialisation. They are buying up industries here and there but there is hardly any industry as such. The prime need in India is industrial power. Without power we can achieve little. It is power that we want and there are big schemes to be operated: unless we have planning, we cannot achieve anything.

The President has referred to strikes. Naturally, it is our desire that there should be no industrial turmoil; when we are all anxious and agree to have greater production of foodstuffs and other commodities. It is rather an easy way of disposing of strikes to say that strikes are results of agitators exploiting strikers for political purposes. Strikes will give you a very good picture of what is happening in a country. They are a kind of barometer or thermometer telling you about the health of industrial organisms. The fact that there are a large number of strikes you cannot ignore. Why is it so ? Obviously, something has gone wrong. One single factor is this. Wages and salaries have arisen, say from 100 to 200, the cost of living from 100 to 285. We have a very big gap between the cost of living and wages and it is that gap which causes hunger and distress, and ultimately strikes. The point is that all over India there is that gap today and unless the gap is bridged there will be industrial troubles. This can be bridged either by lowering the prices or by raising the wages. The point is that this gap has to be bridged. When we consider this matter there is the other side too. Even in the United States there were strikes and the strong measures taken by the Government did not solve them.

The President has referred to the awful condition of the slums in the cities. I entirely agree with you. I have seen some of these bustees and slums in Bombay and Calcutta. I cannot imagine how a human being can live there. Municipalities and corporations have their duties in that matter.

But what about the employers? Obviously, they have a duty. I do not want wealth to be created in such filth and degradation. That way a nation does not grow. It enraged me when I visited some of the bustees in Calcutta and Bombay. I know these labourers were working in industrial firms paying high dividends. I do not know the people who get the dividends at the cost of the slums. There seems to be something scandalous all about this.

During the war and after the war, vast fortunes were accumulated in the hands of a few. On the other hand, a vast number of people could not make

both ends meet. Now it has been a thing for me to wonder at because on the one side we are told that taxation during the war-time was very heavy—there were income-tax, super-tax etc. In the war-time complaints were made about very heavy income-tax and yet, in spite of that tremendous heavy taxation, we have been faced with very, very large incomes in the hands of a few. Where do these vast incomes come from? It just baffles me. I should very much like to have an enquiry into all this. It is not fair for such things to happen. It is not fair. A small number of people were very, very rich and a vast number were very, very poor. There is something wrong in this and the thing must be brought under control. May be it is a fault of human nature; if so, human nature must be controlled. The spirit of the 20th century demanded that the profit motive should go and give place to planned distribution. It is not good to have such enormous discrepancies between individuals in India. How it has happened I do not know; I cannot understand it by any mathematical calculation.

How are we to meet this question of strikes? It is not possible or desirable just to use the power of the State. In fact it is difficult to crush strikes in that way, for sometimes the consequences are very bad. There are at present a great deal of misguided trends in the labour world. Nevertheless, it is true I think that the basic causes are economic and if they are dealt with properly we must bring the problem nearer solution.

In regard to industrial disputes the right thing would be to devise a machinery for their equitable settlement, which is fair to the parties concerned. I do not think there should be compulsion. There is a strong feeling against compulsion. Some such machinery should be devised which at any rate makes it compulsory and attempts to solve the problem before a strike is resorted to.

This business of automatic strikes and lockouts is going to lead to more and more trouble. I think all employers must realise that it is no good ignoring the fact that the only way to deal with labour is through organised labour or a recognised trade union.

Therefore, it should be to the interest of the employer to encourage trade unions. I suggest that employers should encourage trade unions of the right type. Otherwise it would lead to State interference because the Government cannot tolerate industrial strikes. If they encourage trade unions, they will agree in a historical way. It is in the interests of the employers to encourage genuine trade unions in which labour felt themselves secure and not to encourage "pet unions". Naturally, there is a tendency on the part of the employers to dislike trade unions and to set up their own pet ones. This irritates the workers. A healthy trade union movement, cooperating with a machinery for settlement of disputes, is the solution for the moment.

I make a special appeal for taking up scientific research. How much have the Associated Chambers of Commerce spent on research? We cannot go ahead without planned research. Two months ago, the Government of India

had appointed a temporary Planning Board to suggest machinery for planning for the future and to decide priorities. I hope that by the end of this month they will submit their report and that a more satisfactory planning machinery will be devised.

Relations of England and India, apart from political relations, have been relations of an industrial country with a colonial country. India has been a classic example of what could be termed a colonial economy, that is, where a country produces raw materials to be converted into goods by another country and sold in a protected market.

Now, gradually that colonial economy has undergone some changes but plenty still remains. And the British industry grew here under the protection of that colonial economy. Even now there are various safeguards. Although they are differently worded, there are really discriminations. In fact, the safeguards are protection of British interests and industries in India.

There has been a great deal of objection to that in India. Last year the question was raised by the Government of India, and the Government of India wanted to remove those safeguards. But for some reason or other the higher authorities objected to that and postponed that matter. It is obvious that no Indian Government can possibly approve of putting up with any form of safeguards or any kind of protection for anybody.

It has to go and it is bound to go. For example, in regard to shipping industry, the time is ripe when this colonial economy of which there are still many traces has to go. That does not mean, of course, that the British have no place in industry and commerce in India.

Undoubtedly any Indian Government is going to view every problem from the point of view and interest of its nationals. But viewing the problem in that way there will be much room left over for private enterprises for Britishers and others. As a matter of fact, they will have much more to do than they do at present, but with no safeguards. There will be safeguards for Indian nationals.

Of course, we will require capital goods from outside and many other things for our industry and commerce, for our industry and commerce will increase. But obviously you will realise that normally speaking a free India will be anxious to further the interests of her nationals, to make India as little dependent on external agencies in the economic sphere as possible and also to make her as self-sufficient as possible and to raise the standard of the people as rapidly as possible. Gentlemen, you should not misunderstand me. Not everything I have said represents the views of the Government of India. It has got mixed up with my personal views.

So far as I am concerned I do not want that India should be aggressive in the economic sphere. I do not want India to be an aggressor country, politically or economically. I want India to be an advanced country and develop her trade, not in an aggressive spirit or by creating any vested interests in

other countries, but in a cooperative spirit. I dislike imperialism, political or economic. I do not want my own country to indulge in economic aggression because I think that leads to conflicts and war with other countries. In order to avoid such conflicts I want India to develop on more cooperative lines.

Because of Britain's colonial economy, the position of British commercial interests in India has been a very peculiar one. During the last 150 years it has been all mixed up not only with political or commercial matters but there has been overlapping even with ecclesiastical matters. Gradually, the political aspect is being separated from the commercial aspect. Even now you will see the political aspect there.

Mr. President, you have referred to the legislative work that your community has been doing.[8] Now, it has been given a tremendous over-representation in Bengal and Assam.[9] What does it signify except the patent fact that the colonial economy has been translated into the political sphere? A non-national has not even a vote in other countries, but here they have not merely a vote, but proportionally about 10,000 votes. Here politics comes in.

I know something of the politics of Bengal and I know that this factor has influenced the politics of Bengal to a very great extent in the formation and non-formation of governments here. Obviously, this has raised a considerable prejudice against even the industrial and commercial activities of the Britishers here, because they are connected with the political aspects, the economic domination aspect or the economic safeguard aspect. All these factors influence people's judgement.

Christianity has flourished tremendously in India because of the fact that it has been associated with the political aspect of British rule. In southern India, it was a very old institution and was there even before the British administration. But in northern India, its spread was co-extensive with the spread of British power and British officers. In the North, Christianity thus became the political symbol of British domination.

Your commerce and industry appear so much in a political garb that they cannot be judged on merits. In future, obviously, they cannot have a political garb. Naturally economic India will see and create its own industries and controls and there is bound to be some difference between nationals and non-nationals. Of course, non-nationals will have their rights and it will be open to them to become nationals.

8. The president had claimed that, although it had been made abundantly clear to the European community in India that they were unwanted in the politics of the future, their assistance in the field of legislation was still ungrudgingly forthcoming.
9. The European group held nearly ten per cent of the total number of seats in the legislatures in Bengal and Assam.

The President has referred to provincialism. I entirely share his views. But when he says that this country, however it may be divided for political purposes, is commercially one, I cannot understand. Can it be commercially one, if it is not politically one? It is quite conceivable that if the country is politically divided there might be tariff barriers, which cause a great deal of obstruction in the way of industrial and commercial development of the country as a whole.

Many of you are anxious to know what the future of independent India will be, not only for wider reasons but for personal reasons also, because it affects my personal life as it affects yours from different points of view. In fact, many of our personal lives are bound to be affected with this political development.

The future is both clear and unclear, clear in the sense that it is going to be the future of an independent India; but what the contents of that independence will be are not clear today. What relations an independent India will have with other countries one can only guess. I have no doubt that we will be on closer terms with other countries.

With England our relationship is very peculiar. On the one hand, there is a long history of conflict with her. On the other hand, during 150 years of British rule, all manner of visible and invisible contacts have grown up with her. These contacts cannot be cut off suddenly.

Well, so far as our relationship with England is concerned, unless the break comes in such a way as to poison the future this relationship will continue in hundreds of ways that flourish culturally and linguistically. So, it all depends on the friendship that she gets from other countries.

India is bound to be attracted more to those countries which are more friendly towards her. This is a natural sequence in world affairs. And in the context of the world today, if I may say so, India is in a very strong position. To put it crudely, in the context of the world today, politically or commercially or for trade purposes, she is in a strong bargaining position. India is geographically so situated that little can happen in the whole of South-East Asia without India's concurrence. Whether it is a question of defence or trade or anything India comes into the picture. Internally, India is potentially strong, economically strong even now. More so, the moment the change-over is complete, India jumps forward and takes her proper place in the world.

India is certainly not going out as a suppliant. I do not want India to be a suppliant country. Even if we consider the industrial might of the U.S.A., I say India is in a stronger position. It is likely that the problems of the U.S.A. will require accommodation with India. But we can hold out longer. Even if we cannot hold out, there are plenty of other hands to grasp. We want to take the help of England's hands, knowing full well that many of my countrymen will not want us to do so, because they are for the moment full of a past legacy of hatreds and conflicts. I say that once we get over this matter,

thinking more of the future and not looking into the past, this impression will also go out of people's minds. Then we can work together.

13. Time to Overcome Inner Weakness[1]

We have celebrated the Independence Day now for 17 years. We have done so even when our organization was illegal and the very mention of independence meant a challenge to authority. Now that we appear to be on the very eve of independence we have called upon the people of India not to lay emphasis on the purely demonstrative character of this occasion, but rather to stress the solemnity of this occasion. For the day is one of dedication to a cause and no such pledge or dedication can or should be taken lightly. We have faced and struggled with foreign authority in the past. We may have more struggles in the future. But today our weakness is an internal one, weakness and division in our own ranks and even within the Congress. No foreign authority or power can hold us back any longer. But our own inner weakness may well delay freedom or corrupt it even when achieved. It is time, therefore, that we realized this peril and tried our utmost to overcome it.

Independence means clearly today a sovereign, independent, democratic Republic of India. We talk of democracy and we believe in it. But often enough we do not act up to it. For democracy means a capacity to pull together and to find integrated solutions of the problems facing us. Division and cleavage and an intolerance of others do not represent the spirit of democracy. The time has come when we must face the issues squarely and purge ourselves of the evil that is weakening us. Let us, therefore, on this solemn occasion, when we pledge ourselves anew to freedom and independence, determine that we shall think only of the nation and the people as a whole and not work for a particular group or sect. The time for final testing is at hand. May we all prove worthy and be the architects of a great free renascent Indian Republic.

1. Message to the nation, New Delhi, 12 January 1947. Printed in the *Independence Day Supplement* of the *National Herald*, 26 January 1947.

14. Central Planning for Minerals[1]

It is not the intention of the Government of India to deprive provinces and States of their rights in regard to the mineral resources within their respective boundaries, but a central planning agency will be necessary for the conservation and utilisation of mineral assets in all parts of the country; and so will be a central service of skilled advice as contemplated in the proposal to set up a bureau of mines.

The Government will no longer tolerate the wasteful exploitation of mineral assets in any part of the country by any individual or group to the disadvantage of the national economy. The geological survey made so far, though of excellent quality, has been carried on only on a small scale. I also want to point out the necessity for expanding research in the various fields connected with the proper conservation and utilisation of minerals.

1. Address to the National Mineral Policy Conference, New Delhi, 13 January 1947. From the *National Herald*, *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* of 14 January 1947.

15 To G.E.B. Abell[1]

New Delhi
20 January 1947

Dear Mr. Abell,
I have consulted some of my colleagues regarding the proposed visit of Mr. Amery to India. As Mr. Amery is coming on a private visit they cannot suggest that he must not come. He is entitled to visit India if he so chooses. But there is no doubt that, rightly or wrongly, he is very unpopular in India and there is bound to be strong criticism of him in the press. He is associated with certain events and some of his utterances which were greatly resented are still remembered.[2] It will be difficult to prevent or check public references to or criticism of these past events which are associated with Mr. Amery.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. As Secretary of State for India during 1940-45, Amery had not endeared himself to Indian opinion.

16. The New Pledge of Independence[1]

On this day we again pledge ourselves to the cause of India's independence. In the new pledge, though we have omitted reference to the 'Quit India' resolution of 1942, our resolve to free ourselves from foreign bondage firmly stands. Unless we are free we cannot tackle the problems of poverty and want.

I appeal to you to end the existing communal bitterness and not to let anything stand in the way of freedom. As soon as the third party leaves the country, the present conflict between different sections of the people will be easily resolved.

Though there are many obstacles in the way of the Constituent Assembly we are determined to go ahead and see that it succeeds in framing the constitution for a free India.

1. Speech at New Delhi, 26 January 1947. From *The Hindustan Times*, 27 January 1947.

17 The Gurkha Regiments[1]

The Government of India's position in regard to the retention of Gurkhas in the army has been made clear. They would like to continue Gurkha regiments in the Indian army. The number of Gurkha troops would depend on the total strength of the Indian army. They are opposed to the direct employment of Gurkhas in the British or any other army. The Indian army would naturally be officered by Indians, including Gurkhas. There will be no difficulty in Gurkhas getting commissions and facilities for training etc. will be given to them. All these questions will come up for discussion at the proposed tripartite conference.[2]

2. There should be no difficulty about the payment of pensions and the like to Gurkha soldiers....

1. Note written on 28 January 1947. Extracts. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 4-C. A/47, p. 7/notes, National Archives of India.
2. A tripartite agreement on recruitment was concluded between the United Kingdom, India and Nepal on 8 August 1947. By this agreement the existing Gurkha regiments were divided, four being allotted to Britain and six to India.

18. Public Opinion and Planning[1]

In recent years a great deal of work has been done in planning both by the Central and Provincial Governments and by non-official bodies. The Advisory Planning Board[2] was appointed in October last year to do a rapid survey of the field and to make recommendations regarding the coordination and improvement of planning, and as regards objectives and priorities and the future machinery of planning. These are matters of the highest importance and have now a special urgency. It is vital that public opinion should be seized of them and should be in a position to influence public policy. The Government of India trust that the publication of this volume will evoke interest and constructive criticism from a considerable body of opinion in the country and so contribute to the solution of some of our major problems.

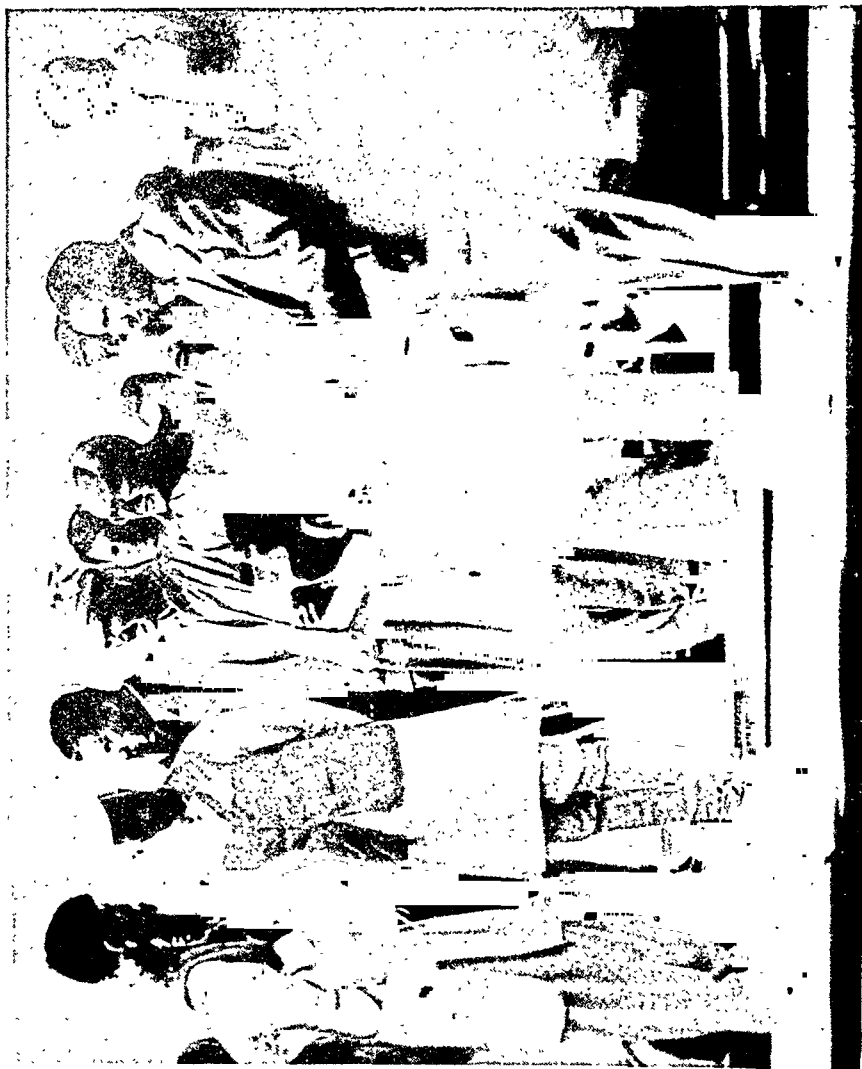
1. New Delhi, 29 January 1947. Foreword to *The Report of the Advisory Planning Board* (New Delhi, 1946).
2. The Board, appointed by the Interim Government, with K.C. Neogy as chairman, in its report in December 1946, recommended the establishment of a single, compact and authoritative organisation, mainly advisory in character, for the purpose of planning.

19. To C. Rajagopalachari[1]

New Delhi
30 January 1947

My dear Rajaji,
All of us are rather vague as to what is being done in regard to industrial development. Is it possible for your Director-General[2] to prepare a brief report on the present position, mentioning in particular the specific schemes in hand and when they are likely to be complete? Also, what other schemes are in prospect? We talk vaguely of what is being done and what we want done without knowing much of the exact position. I think there should be periodical checking of the rate of progress. We should have reports at least once a quarter about the schemes, so that we may be able to judge of the progress made.

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 4, pp. 90-91.
2. S.A. Venkataraman, Director-General, Industries and Supplies.

IN THE N.W.F.P., OCTOBER 1946

WITH KHAN SAHEB IN THE N.W.F.P., OCTOBER 1946

There is another aspect of this matter. It is important that we should give due publicity in India and abroad to our schemes of development. Most people seem to think that our main industry is rioting. The best way to check this false notion is to supply in attractive form facts and figures of what is actually being done in regard to industrial and other forms of development. I suggest, therefore, that a brief report might be prepared by your Director-General, and in addition some kind of propaganda pamphlets might also be produced and made over to the Information Department.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

10

INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

I. The United Nations

1. Indian Struggle in South Africa a World Issue[1]

Many a time we have sent our greetings and our assurances of solidarity to our countrymen in South Africa as we have followed their heroic struggle for India's honour and human rights. Now on the eve of a change in the Government in India, when we are assuming new and onerous responsibilities, I should like to repeat this greeting and assurance.

Wherever we may be and whatever burden we may have to carry, our guiding purpose will be India's freedom and India's honour, and we shall seek to defend them wherever they are threatened. Today they are threatened in South Africa[2] and that question is an all-India question in which all of us are involved. In India or South Africa or in international assemblies we shall fight this issue and we will not give in till we secure full recognition of Indians' rights and India's honour.

The struggle in South Africa is, however, not merely an Indian issue. It concerns all Asians whose honour and rights are threatened, and all the people of Asia should, therefore, support it. It concerns ultimately the Africans who have suffered so much by racial discrimination and suppression. It is a struggle for equality of opportunity for all races and against the Nazi doctrine of racialism. Therefore, the Indians in South Africa should help in every way and cooperate with the Africans.

Our cause thus becomes a world cause in which all people who believe in freedom are interested.

1. Message given to Ismail A. Cahalia, Vice-President, Transvaal Indian Congress. Printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 4 September 1946.
2. The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, known as the "Ghetto Act", 3 June 1946, regulated the acquisition and occupation by Asians of real estate in the provinces of Natal and Transvaal. It conferred a limited franchise on Indians and discriminated against South African nationals of Asian or 'coloured' origin.

2. On South Africa's Proposal to Annex South-West Africa[1]

I agree.[2] From every point of view South Africa's proposal should be opposed. On principle we must oppose any such annexation of mandated or any other territory anywhere and ask for U.N.O. trusteeship, recognizing that sovereignty ultimately resides in the people concerned and their wishes and interests are paramount. South Africa's record as a mandatory power has been bad and in no event can she be trusted in this way. Then there is the present Indian question in South Africa which inevitably brings out South Africa's treatment of non-white races. India has no particular interest in South-West Africa but she must support the interests of Africans.

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 5 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 6(12)-cc/46, pp. 9-10, National Archives of India.
2. In his note of 5 September 1946, K.P.S. Menon had recommended that India should oppose the proposed incorporation of South-West Africa in the Union of South Africa as the annexation of a mandated territory was fundamentally opposed to the conception of mandates and trusteeship. It was more objectionable as South Africa was "not noted for freedom from racial prejudice." He suggested that South Africa should first put the territory under trusteeship and then represent to the Trusteeship Council.

3. The United Nations[1]

I have gone through the papers on this file carefully and read the notes of Major Fry,[2] Mr. K.P.S. Menon[3] and Mr. Weightman. These notes give all the background information and approach the subject from somewhat different points of view. Though the approaches are slightly different, there is not much difference in the actual recommendations. The subject is, however,

1. Note, 5 September 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 6 (58)-cc/46, National Archives of India.
2. Leslie Alfred Charles Fry (1908-1976); joined Indian Political Service in 1933; Deputy Secretary, External Affairs Department, 1946; joined the British Foreign Service in 1947; First Secretary, U.K. High Commission, India, 1947-48; served later in Portugal, Hungary, Indonesia and Brazil.
3. K.P.S. Menon wished British support to be sought for India's election to the Security Council as India had on merits a 'cast-iron' case.

one of importance both in regard to the approach and the conclusions, and it is desirable that it should be considered in Council. A summary should therefore be prepared for this purpose and steps taken for an immediate reference to Council.

At the next session of the United Nations General Assembly, which is due to begin at New York on the 23rd September, 1946, the agenda includes three items :—

(i) Election of three non-permanent members of the Security Council.[4]
(ii) Election of other members of the Economic and Social Council, and
(iii) Election, if required, of elected members of the Trusteeship Council.

India is already a member of the Economic and Social Council.[5] As regards the Trusteeship Council, the matter is still in the air, and it would appear, as pointed out in the notes referred to, that the prospect of India obtaining representation in this Council is very faint. If there was a choice between the Security Council and the Trusteeship Council, the opinion seems to be that we should prefer the Trusteeship Council. But if there is no real chance of our getting into the Trusteeship Council[6] there is no question of choice.

We have thus to consider the question of India standing for the Security Council. It has been pointed out that *prima facie* and on the merits we have a very strong case for election to this Council.[7] Whatever the present position of India might be, she is potentially a Great Power. Undoubtedly, in future she will have to play a very great part in security problems of Asia and the Indian Ocean, more especially of the Middle East and South-East Asia. Indeed, India is the pivot round which these problems will have to be considered. I need not go further into this matter as the importance of India to any scheme of Asian security is vital. It is absurd for India to be treated like any small power in this connection. Whether we succeed in getting into the Security Council or not, I think we should take up this attitude at the beginning and throughout that India is the centre of security in Asia and that, therefore, India must have a central place in any council considering these matters.

As has been pointed out in one of the notes, Asia is very poorly represented

4. Mexico, Egypt and the Netherlands were the three retiring members of the Security Council.
5. India had another year to serve on the Economic and Social Council.
6. K.P.S. Menon pointed out that there would be four States administering trust territories, namely, Britain, Belgium, Australia and New Zealand, and four States, not administering them: France, China, the United States and the Soviet Union. Election would take place, when that number was not equal. There was little chance of India or any other country being elected to the Trusteeship Council.
7. The criteria for election to the Security Council as laid down in Article 23 of the Charter are: (a) contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the U.N.O. and (b) geographical position.

in the Security Council, although it is recognised that in future Asia may well have to play a big part in the prevention of war as well as in war itself. So far as India is concerned, we would welcome the inclusion in the Security Council of any of the countries of Western Asia or South-East Asia. But the fact remains that it is India that counts in the security and defence of both these regions far more than any other country. Thus, it would seem to be the obvious course that India, by virtue of her geographical and strategical position, resources and latent power, should be a member of the Security Council.

It is pointed out that there is a convention that no State other than the permanent members of the Security Council should be elected to both that Council and the Economic and Social Council. H.M.G. rightly questioned the desirability of this unwritten agreement, but pointed out that it would stand unless there is a two-thirds majority against it. It may be difficult to get this two-thirds majority as many of the smaller countries might oppose such a proposal. Even so, there is no reason why we should not put our case forward strongly and seek to get this two-thirds majority. In doing so, necessarily, we shall seek the support of other Powers including H.M.G. and U.S.A. If sufficient support is denied us, even so I do not see any reason why we should tacitly submit to occupy a secondary position in such important matters. Our natural position in world assemblies is going to be inevitably one of the leadership of all the smaller countries of Asia. We should co-operate with them and seek their support and, even if we fail in getting elected, the very fact that we have put out a strong case will influence world opinion and raise India in the eyes of the world. I do not see why we should be afraid of being defeated in an election, though naturally we should do our best to avoid it. To accept a secondary position right from the beginning is neither good policy nor in consonance with India's dignity.

Unfortunately, almost everything that comes up before the U.N.O. is considered from the point of view of one group or bloc of nations or another. Sometimes, inevitably, we have to support some group, but, generally speaking, the attitude India should adopt should be an independent attitude with no marked alignment with any group. We should make it clear that we stand not only for Indian interests but, more especially, for the interests of peace and freedom everywhere and that we are not going to be dragged in the wake of power politics so far as we can help it. It is fitting especially now that there has been a change in the Government of India that India should play a much more independent role in foreign affairs. That role should, of course, be a friendly role to other countries, but it should be made clear that our policy is our own and not determined by other people.

I feel, therefore, that our delegation should try to secure a seat for India in the Security Council and that instructions should be issued accordingly to them.

The question will not then arise of our supporting any other country for a seat in the Security Council.[8] Generally speaking, however, our delegation should try to encourage Asian countries in finding seats in international councils or committees and thus redress the present over-representation of Europe in them.

In regard to the election to the Economic and Social Council, our delegation might be given latitude to vote as they think fit subject to my remarks above that Asia should have greater representation and that we should avoid aligning ourselves with any particular group.

As suggested by Secretary, steps should immediately be taken to place this matter before Council.[9]

8. Syria had asked for India's support for her election to the Security Council.
9. The cabinet at a meeting held on 11 September 1946 approved of the proposal that India should apply for election to the Security Council. For that purpose it was decided to instruct India's representatives to the U.N.O. and to approach the H.M.G.

4. The Veto in the United Nations[1]

I have considered the very useful notes of Major Fry, Mr. K.P.S. Menon and Mr. Weightman. I have also referred to the Charter of the United Nations and the report of the San Francisco Conference. The question of the Great Powers' veto has been discussed on innumerable occasions in the press and elsewhere ever since it came up for consideration. Indeed, even in the days of the old League of Nations there used to be many references to it and sometimes criticisms of it. Obviously, the question is not of principle any more but one of the practical line of action that we should take. All the relevant facts and viewpoints are given in the notes I have mentioned. On the whole, I am inclined to agree with Mr. K.P.S. Menon's viewpoint.[2] Mr. Weightman more or less agrees with this, subject to one variation.[3]

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 7 September 1946, Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 6(77)-cc/46/notes, pp. 13-16, National Archives of India.
2. K.P.S. Menon pointed out that under Article 15 of the Charter, it was open to the General Assembly to discuss the manner in which the veto had been exercised. If the proposed amendment was supported it would irritate Russia.
3. Weightman considered that the right approach to the discussion of the use of veto was to suggest that the Great Powers should place themselves under a self-denying ordinance not to use it until they approached the stage of the application of the enforcement of the articles of the Charter.

2. There can be no doubt that we should oppose the Cuban proposal.[4]

3. As for the Australian proposal,[5] although it is vague and calls merely for a consideration of Article 27 which relates to the veto, still there can be little doubt that such a consideration will mean a criticism and condemnation of the Russian exercise of the veto. U.S.A. and U.K. have also used this veto provision on one or two occasions, but Russia has exercised her veto power more often and there has been considerable outcry against this among the smaller powers.

4. In a purely democratic assembly there is no reason why the Big Powers should have a specially privileged position. Nevertheless it is obvious that the Big Powers have a special position in the world today and if they fall out there is trouble which the smaller powers cannot check. The provision for the veto though obviously undesirable is some recognition of the real facts prevailing in the world today. It is no use ignoring them, though a misuse of the veto should certainly be criticised and objected to.

5. Mr. Weightman suggests that we should approach this question in a cautious way and in taking part in a discussion on the Australian proposal ask the Great Powers to place themselves under a self-denying ordinance in regard to the veto, the idea being that they should not use it until they approach the stage of the application of the enforcement of the Articles in the Charter. Such an approach can be made, such appeals can be addressed to the Great Powers, but these pious appeals and admonitions do not carry one very far.

6. The question thus resolves itself not into one of principle but of a consideration of the exact situation then prevailing. In a peaceful atmosphere a discussion on this problem would be worthwhile and even though it might not lead to positive results, it would lead to a certain moral check on the use of the veto. But in a highly tense atmosphere when the whole conception of a United Nations Organisation itself is endangered, such a discussion might well lead to very unfortunate consequences and even to a possible secession from the U.N.O. A secession by any of the major powers would obviously have far-reaching consequences. The U.N.O. would gradually cease to have the importance which it deserves and which to some extent

4. The Cuban proposal called for a general conference of the members of the United Nations in accordance with Article 109 of the Charter with a view to modifying the veto article and so eliminating the veto privilege.
5. The Australian proposal was for a discussion of the application of the relevant article of the Charter without any suggestion for specific amendment and for the elimination of the veto.

it possesses today. It may gradually fade away like the League of Nations in the late thirties. Therefore, from a practical point of view, we have to be very cautious in our approach and before deciding on any actual action to be taken in the Assembly on India's behalf consider the exact situation then prevailing. If any discussion on the veto provision appears likely to lead not only to heated debate but to possible disruption, then obviously such a discussion is wrong and should be resisted. If disruption has to come some time or other, it will no doubt come, but there is no reason why anything that we might do should expedite it.

7. Mr. Weightman refers to the recent press report[6] that Russia was contemplating withdrawal from the United Nations. Whether this report is correct or not I do not know. But obviously things are pretty bad at present and the Big Powers are showing an amazing lack of the spirit of cooperation. We seem to be drifting towards greater conflicts. For the moment it does not very much help to say as to which Power is to blame for this. *Prima facie*, Russia is more noncooperative and often rather aggressively rude, but whoever might be to blame the fact remains that the situation becomes increasingly critical. It seems to me, therefore, that the Australian proposal at the present moment, though innocuous in appearance, is full of dangerous possibilities. We should avoid being entangled in this business.

8. What then are we to do if such a proposal comes up for discussion, as it may well do? I think we should make it perfectly clear that we attach the greatest importance to the continuance of the U.N.O. and to the Great Powers cooperating and functioning within it. Further that even though we dislike the use of the veto, except possibly on very rare and special occasions, nevertheless we do not wish to support any proposal which adds to discord and suspicion of each other which unfortunately exists today. The point is that our attitude must be one of bringing together different Powers and not one of adding to their ill-feeling for each other and we should not support any proposal which we think will lead to the latter result. In the critical situation of today we should not encourage, or be parties to, a kind of mass attack on Russia in the United Nations General Assembly. How exactly our delegates should proceed, keeping this viewpoint before them, might well be left to them. The main thing is that we should function as peacemakers and not lose our larger perspective because we have been annoyed at something or other. That larger perspective requires the continuance of the U.N.O. and some kind of forum where the Great Powers as well as the small can function together. We have to pay a price for this occasionally, sometimes a high price, but the alternative is infinitely worse. I should not

6. In the *Daily Mail*.

like the Indian delegation to array themselves among the accusers of any Great Power on this particular issue.

9. As Mr. Weightman suggests this matter is of importance and it might be placed before the Cabinet. He will, therefore, please have a summary prepared for the purpose.

5. To M. C. Chagla[1]

New Delhi
September 11th, 1946

My dear Chagla,
I am very happy to learn that you have accepted our invitation to go as a delegate to the U.N.O. General Assembly meeting.[2] As you know, this was to have been held on September 23rd but there is every likelihood of its being postponed for a month or so. We have not received formal intimation of this yet. I hope the next date will suit you. We shall of course let you know and make all necessary arrangements for your travel and stay at the other end.

The meeting is an important one from every point of view and more specially India's point of view. There is the South African Indian matter,[3] there is the general question of trusteeship[4] and also the question of South Africa's application to absorb South-West Africa[5] which we oppose.

I hope to see you anyhow before you have to go.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. M.C. Chagla Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The session of the U.N. General Assembly began in New York on 23 October 1946.
3. India had complained to the United Nations against the South African Government's racial discrimination against Asians in general and Indians in particular as a denial of human rights and fundamental freedoms and contrary to the U.N. Charter.
4. In order to assign colonial territories to individual member States for administration under the trusteeship of the United Nations the Trusteeship Council was set up on 14 December 1946.
5. South Africa refused to place the mandated territory of South-West Africa under U.N. trusteeship and on 4 November 1946 proposed to incorporate it into the Union. The proposal was rejected on 14 December by the General Assembly, which adopted an Indian resolution asking the South African Government to submit a trusteeship agreement for the territory.

6. Violence in South Africa[1]

I am informed by a friend in Durban that my name has been freely used there by some people in support of a violent struggle in place of the present nonviolent campaign being carried on in South Africa and that the association of Africans and others for this violent struggle is being sought. I am surprised to learn this because I am quite clear that it will be fatal for the Indians in South Africa to adopt violent methods in their struggle. If the nonviolent method is desirable in India, it is far more necessary in South Africa to cooperate with Africans there and I hope they will do so. The issue raised in South Africa is something much more than an Indian issue. It is an issue which affects all Asians and, of course, all Africans. Therefore this cooperation is necessary between all those affected. But cooperation can only be effective and succeed on the basis of peaceful methods and it would be folly to indulge in violence.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 13 September 1946. *The Hindustan Times*, 14 September 1946.

7. Policy on Dependent Territories[1]

I have read the notes on the subject prepared by the Secretaries, E.A.D., and Commonwealth Relations; also summary prepared by Commonwealth Relations.

2. Considering this quesion of Tanganyika and other areas, we have to be clear about the general policy to be pursued by us in regard to all dependent, mandated and colonial territories. If we take each separately, without any relation to general principles, we are likely to arrive at inconsistent decisions. Thus the first question for us to consider is our general attitude and the principles that will govern it. This question came up before us in regard to the ex-Italian colonies of North Africa and I indicated then what our general approach should be. India has special interests, mainly concerned with the protection of Indian nationals abroad. India also has a

1. Note, 15 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 6(76)-cc/46, pp. 31-34/n., National Archives of India.

special interest in the general problem of colonial territories wherever they may be situated. As India has been in the past one of the major colonial areas under foreign domination, it has been in a sense the crux of the colonial question. By virtue of its size, resources and historical background during the last 200 years it has been a kind of example for others. Now that big changes are coming over the Indian political and economic structure, other countries, in a more or less like situation, are obviously affected. There has been a tendency for many of the dependent countries of Asia and Africa to look towards India for leadership in their attempts to attain political and economic freedom. It is right that India should help in this process both because it is the correct approach and also in the narrow interests of India herself. It is admitted now that any world structure should have a certain uniformity and cohesion. It is becoming progressively impossible for different principles to be applied to different areas or countries, specially those under some kind of colonial domination. The United Nations Charter itself recognizes some of these principles.

3. While India must necessarily aim at protecting the interests and honour of her nationals abroad, it has been repeatedly stated that we do not seek any special privileges against the inhabitants of the countries concerned. This would apply specially to African countries where the inhabitants are relatively backward and have been exploited in the past by others, including to some extent even Indians. Our objective should be to help in the rapid progress of these African territories towards political and economic freedom.

4. The general principle that was laid down in regard to ex-Italian colonies was this: that sovereignty resides in the people of the country themselves and they should be enabled to exercise it as early as is feasible by framing their own constitution and taking charge of the destiny of their own country. This may not be possible everywhere in the immediate future and therefore some kind of interim arrangement has to be made in order to bring about the change peacefully and in an orderly manner. It was suggested, therefore, that these countries should be placed directly under the trusteeship of the U.N. Trusteeship Council. How this U.N. trusteeship should be exercised is a matter for further consideration. Obviously, present conditions will have to be adapted to the new proposal and it would not be perhaps desirable to upset these existing arrangements without making due provision for an orderly change.

5. This leads to the conclusion that the old mandate system, or anything similar to it, should not be continued. It is true that in the past some mandates produced relatively satisfactory results, some were unsatisfactory, and some were thoroughly bad. Any attempt however to distinguish between

these and to make differing provisions in regard to them would lead obviously to difficulties and recrimination. Also in the present state of friction between the Great Powers, if one Great Power has a particular mandate, others will make similar demands. It will be difficult to oppose any such claim if once it is admitted in the case of any single Power. Generally speaking, the mandate system was not essentially different from the previous direct colonial system and the League of Nations could not interfere much, if at all. This system was condemned even before the last war and it cannot be revived now.

6. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that no single Power should have a separate mandate or should be an individual trustee for any colonial territory. Apart from this coming into conflict with our general approach, it would mean a tug-of-war between different Powers over this question of individual trusteeship. There is enough conflict and friction already in the international sphere and we should avoid doing anything which adds to it. We must, therefore, recognise in regard to all colonial and dependent areas that

(1) they are entitled to immediate freedom and self-determination subject to the U.N. Charter

or

(2) that while the sovereignty resides in the people and they are entitled to independence and self-determination, during a relatively brief period the U.N. Trusteeship Council will exercise this sovereignty and supervise the administration with a view to reach the objective of independence for the country as rapidly as possible, and preferably within a stated period.

7. These principles and conclusions should apply to Tanganyika[2] also. We need not go into the question of whether the mandate of Tanganyika was a success or not. On the whole, Tanganyika was better-off than many other mandated territories. But because of this fact, we cannot make a distinction in regard to the future.

8. So far as India is concerned, it is a relevant fact which we cannot ignore that attempts have been made in the past, and they are being continued today, to discriminate against Indians and to some extent to squeeze them

2. In 1920 Tanganyika became a mandate territory administered by the British under the authority of the League of Nations, and in 1945 it became a trust territory of the United Nations. In April 1964, Tanganyika, Zanzibar and Pemba combined and formed the United Republic of Tanganyika which in October 1964 was renamed as Tanzania.

out from East Africa, more especially Kenya. We can agree to no arrangement in regard to the future which permits this process of discrimination to continue. Therefore, India has a direct interest in East Africa and in Tanganyika. Indeed it appears that next to the Africans, Indians form the largest population group in Tanganyika.[3] In the phrase of the Charter, India is one of the States directly concerned with the matter. Her concern is far greater than that of Belgium or South Africa.

9. Naturally we should proceed in this matter in cooperation with H.M.G. and seek their help in furthering our viewpoints, both general and special. It may be, however, sometimes, that there is a difference of opinion between our viewpoint and that of H.M.G. in regard to these colonial territories, in spite of every attempt to minimize these differences. If so, we should place our own viewpoint in a friendly way basing it on the general principles we have enunciated which cannot easily be challenged. If the old mandate of territories is placed under the direct trusteeship of the United Nations, it will be natural for the U.K. to be intimately concerned with this trusteeship both through the Trusteeship Council and probably in its direct application to Tanganyika. All these matters are in a fluid condition and no one can say exactly how things will take shape in the future. Much will depend on world developments and the pace of events in the international sphere. We have to take risks anyhow and it is better to take a risk basing ourselves on general principles which are not only in full conformity with the U.N. Charter and the many declarations made by leaders of the United Nations, but are also far more likely to lead to a peaceful solution of the difficult problems we have to face.

10. We should, therefore, I think, proceed in the following manner:

(1) Ask for the recognition of the principle that sovereignty resides in the people of territories concerned and they must ultimately decide their constitution and way of living, subject to the general principles of the United Nations.

(2) During the interim period before such sovereignty can be exercised directly by the people concerned, the United Nations Trusteeship Council should exercise it on their behalf in the interests of the people themselves with a view to prepare them politically, educationally and economically for a rapid transition.

(3) The U.N. Trusteeship Council should make such arrengements for this interim period as to take into consideration the existing situation and entrust the task of supervision to those who are chiefly and directly concerned, and at the same time to associate the people of the country

3. According to the 1940 census the Indian population in Tanganyika was 23,422.

concerned progressively with the administration. It would be desirable to fix a time limit for the changeover.

(4) We should inform H.M.G. that India is for obvious reasons directly concerned with Tanganyika and should be recognised as such and we should seek their support in this matter. When the question arises before the U.N.O., we should adopt the same attitude.

(5) We should endeavour to have a representative of India on the Trusteeship Council and seek H.M.G.'s support for this. It appears doubtful, however, whether in existing circumstances this is likely to materialise. Nevertheless we should place our claim forward formally and point out not only the direct concern of India in this matter, but the importance of India in all such matters.

(6) We should lay stress on the provisions of the Charter governing trusteeship which emphasize the primary interests of the peoples of territories in trust and point out that there should be "equal treatment in social, economic and commercial matters for all members of the United Nations and their nationals and also equal treatment for the latter in the administration of justice."

(7) The draft Trusteeship Agreement which H.M.G. have suggested[4] will have to be considered from the above points of view and our comments thereon should be communicated to H.M.G.

4. The draft trusteeship agreement proposed the placing of mandated territories in Africa, notably Tanganyika, under U.N. trusteeship.

8. An Honest Foreign Policy[1]

I have read Mr. Mani's letter and found it of interest even though it is rather ancient.[2] From this letter it appears that if any country takes up a straight and truthful attitude in consonance with the declared aims and objects of the United Nations, this is considered embarrassing. If the U.S.S.R. adopt

1. Note, 16 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 1(9)-cc/46, pp. 4-7, National Archives of India.
2. R.S. Mani, adviser-secretary, Indian delegation to the League Assembly, had written to H. Weightman, in his letter of 11 June 1946, about India's interest in the future of mandated territories and the methods of distribution of the assets of the League.

an attitude which is not liked by some other Governments and try to gain support for it from some of their allied countries, this is described as coaching her satellite Governments in order to embarrass and bring the maximum discredit to the Governments of the British Empire.[3] If any other Power adopts a like policy, this presumably is an earnest effort to face difficulties and to find some common solution. This whole stage play and manoeuvring behind the scenes brings little credit to any of the countries concerned. New Zealand is one of the few countries that emerges with credit. Even during the sessions of the League of Nations, New Zealand used to play a brave and straight part, often to the great annoyance of other nations who preferred a more roundabout way.[4]

2. The whole process appears to be one of making fine heart-warming declarations of the rights of individuals and nations, and then making every effort to interpret these declarations differently and taking away all the real substance from them. It is an old game played by diplomats for ages past. There is this big difference, however, that in the old days diplomats were franker and they did not speak in such resounding language about world peace and freedom. Now we have this brave language but there is no difference in the action that follows. All this is a great pity and is really tragic. Questions affecting hundreds of millions of people are discussed in this opportunist and pettifogging manner and the fine impulses of peoples are prostituted by diplomats for base ends.

3. I am inclined to appreciate the attitude that South Africa has taken up here and elsewhere,[5] though I utterly disagree with it and think that it should be opposed with all our strength, but it is a straight attitude, though a selfish one and there is no hypocrisy about it.

4. It seems an absurd proposition to say that the transfer of territories to trusteeship should be voluntary. The original China resolution,[6] which embarrassed so many people, appears to me very feeble. The subsequent

3. It was alleged by the British Government that the Soviet Union was coaching countries like Poland and Yugoslavia on the mandates issue.
4. New Zealand was in favour of the League making a definite recommendation for the transfer of mandated territories to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations.
5. South Africa opposed the recommendation of the League that the mandated territories should be transferred to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations and disclosed its intention to annex S.W. Africa.
6. It expressed satisfaction at the manner in which the Trusteeship Council, assisted by the Permanent Mandates Commission, had performed the functions of the League with respect to the mandates system.

China resolution is feebler.[7] Both are couched in vague language which everyone knows means nothing at all in practice. To express satisfaction with the old mandate system of the permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, is to do something which is not justified by facts. It was generally agreed prior to the last war that the mandate system had failed and the League of Nations Mandates Commission was powerless to do much about it. Even in the best examples of these mandates there were numerous grievances and objectionable features. About the others the less said the better. If the new Trusteeship Council of the United Nations is going to function at all like the League of Nations Mandates Commission, then it is a pity that we are wasting so much time over it.

5. I see no reason why India should allow herself to be exploited in this game of greedy and opportunist Powers who say one thing and mean another. I think it is time that India should take up a straight attitude even though she might have little support in the Assemblies of Nations. I am inclined to think, however, that any country, which adopts this straight attitude and speaks really in terms of the United Nations Charter without whittling them in any way, will have a vast audience in the world and tremendous support. India will inevitably become the leader of many of the smaller nations and more especially of the dependent nations who have so long been the playthings of others.

6. About the representation of Asian nations in international assemblies India should certainly take a strong line. There is no reason why Europe or the Americas should be considered the pivots of the modern world and Asia should be ignored. Asia is inevitably going to be one of the big centres of international affairs in the future and the sooner this is recognised and given effect to the better.

7. I hope that all our delegations to international conferences will bear these considerations in mind and act accordingly.

7. This resolution, on similar lines as the first one, spoke of the development and well-being of peoples not yet able to stand alone in the strenuous conditions of the modern world as a sacred trust of civilization.

9. India and Africa[1]

New Delhi
27 September 1946

Dear Friends,

It has given me great pleasure to receive your letter of September 16[2] through the good offices of Raja Sir Maharaj Singh who has recently returned from Kenya.[3]

I am deeply grateful to you for your good wishes on the establishment of the Interim National Government of India.

We have long struggled for the freedom and independence of India, but always we have thought of this freedom as a common heritage for all, and more especially for those who have been deprived of it. India, I hope, will always stand and work for this wider freedom.

We are particularly interested in the people of Africa, who have suffered so much in the past and who are suffering still from exploitation by foreign elements. You can rest assured that the voice of India will always be raised in the cause of African freedom.

I agree with you that cordial relations should be established between the people of Africa and the people of India,[4] and I reciprocate fully the sentiments of the resolution passed by the East African Indian National Congress[5] which you have conveyed to me. I trust that it will be possible for the African, Arab and Indian communities in Kenya as well as elsewhere to cooperate together for their common advantage.

1. *The Hindustan Times*, 29 September 1946.
2. Six leading African leaders in Kenya—Henry Muoria, George K.N. Degwa, Zabron Oti, Jessis Karioki, J. Karioki Kahugu and Mbiyu Koinange—had offered congratulations on the establishment of the "government of the people in India" and desired closer cooperation between India and Africa particularly in the field of education.
3. A delegation was sent to Kenya on 21 August 1946 under the leadership of Maharaj Singh to study the immigration question. The other members of the delegation were K. Sarwar Hasan and C.S. Jha.
4. It had been suggested that representatives of the African peoples should be invited to attend the Indians Overseas Conference to be held in November in India and that a special conference of the African and Asian leaders be convened under Nehru's patronage.
5. A resolution passed by the 18th session of the East African Indian National Congress, which met from 6 to 8 September 1946 at Mombasa in Kenya, emphasised the need for promoting full understanding between the Arab, African and Indian communities, and the creation of an organisation to work for their general advancement.

I like the idea that African students should come to the universities and technical institutes of India and we shall try to encourage this in so far as we can.[6]

You have referred to the Inter-Asian Relations Conference which we propose to hold in March next in New Delhi. As its name implies, this conference is more or less limited to Asia, but I am sure that friendly observers from Africa will be welcome at this conference and we can then confer together as to what we should do for developing closer relations between Asia and Africa.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. Suggestions were made for the establishment of scholarships for African students in Indian universities and provision for special facilities to them for technical, commercial and agricultural studies in India.

10. To Muhammad Zafrullah Khan[1]

New Delhi
27 September 1946

My dear Sir Zafrullah Khan,[2]

Thank you for your letter of the 18th September. I was very glad when I heard that you would be able to go to the U.N.O. Later when we were informed that you would not be able to go, we were compelled to make other arrangements and we fixed up our delegates for the U.N.O. Only five delegates can be sent and we have already got five acceptances. Now that you find that you might be able to go, we are placed in a difficulty as we would have to ask someone to stand down. This would be embarrassing for us as well as for others. I very much wish that we could have had you in this General Assembly meeting but it seems a little difficult now to make another change when all has been fixed up. I hope you will understand.

I entirely agree with you about the issue of visas for India and we shall take action accordingly.[3]

1. File No. 301-PS/46-PMS.
2. At this time Judge of the Federal Court of India.
3. Zafrullah Khan suggested that visas for India should be granted by the Indian High Commission in London and not by the Foreign Office.

About your suggestion in regard to the use of alcoholic drinks in Viceroy's House, etc., I shall consult my colleagues.[4] As a matter of fact there is very little of public social intercourse between us and Viceroy's House etc. We meet in private life at meals or otherwise and no alcoholic drinks are on the table. It seems to me that making any public appeal to the Viceroy or others might be construed as a discourtesy, specially when no such occasion has arisen.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Zafrullah Khan wanted Nehru to make a public appeal to stop the serving of liquor on occasions when Members of the Interim Government were present. He felt that the Viceroy should be persuaded to agree to this appeal in regard to functions at the Viceroy's House.

11. The Meaning of Trusteeship[1]

2. On a previous occasion in a C.R. Department file I have expressed my views generally on the question of trusteeship.[2] How far those views fitted in with the actual provisions of the Charter I cannot say without much closer study, but I imagine that there was no conflict. Mr. Menon has apparently tried to express those views of mine in terms of what can be done. I am naturally in agreement with this approach.

3. Mr. Menon has pointed out that perhaps the real difference in approach is not so much the method as the objective. If the objective is a relatively good government, in a somewhat narrow sense of the word, administration by a single State would presumably be better. It would produce a certain stability and a uniform method of dealing with problems. If, however, the objective is self-government, the approach might be different. Stability would give place to a certain dynamic content which, while it produces upsets and inconveniences, at the same time leads more rapidly to the objective aimed at.

1. Note, 30 September 1946. Extracts. External Affairs Department File No. 6(76)-cc/46, pp. 57-58/n., National Archives of India.
2. See *ante*, item 3.

4. There is another point of view also. Are we bent on rapid social and economic changes so as to raise the standard of the people as fast as possible, or do we aim at slower but possibly more ordered progress? I imagine that the choice really is not ours in the present context of affairs. Whether we want it or not, rapid change, both political and economic, has become essential if we are to avoid greater upsets. Therefore the question before us is not one of a stable administration only, though that is always desirable, but how to ensure this very rapid change to more or less modern conditions. Also it is essential that any political form of Government or any economic structure should have a large measure of support from the people concerned. Who are the people concerned? Not, I hope, merely a few tribal chiefs or those few who have prospered in existing conditions, but rather the vast numbers who have not prospered and who are generally speaking in a miserable and backward condition. It is their advancement that must be sought. There is going to be no security or satisfaction among these people if their interests are not made paramount. Self-government and independence have become the cries everywhere and they have a certain dynamic quality which cannot be denied. Any arrangement which does not keep this in the forefront is not likely to bring about security or stability.

5. We have already instructed our delegates at the Paris Peace Conference as well as to the U.N.O. General Assembly that our general approach must be one which recognises that sovereignty resides with the people of the country and their right to independence and self-determination. If this is so, then certain conclusions follow. Obviously nothing should be imposed upon them if they disagree to any large extent. If immediate freedom and independence are not practicable or feasible, then some temporary arrangement has to be made. A period must be fixed for this and the objectives for that temporary Government must be strictly laid down.

6. Who is to administer this temporary Government? It is rather odd that this question is considered in the abstract and the principal parties concerned who are supposed to decide are outsiders and not the people of the country. It is odder still that the Mandatory Power itself is given the choice of placing its territory under trusteeship or not. Further it is made clear that if the terms of trusteeship are not to the liking of the Mandatory Power, then it can refuse those terms and continue to function in its old manner. That surely is a complete negation of the high sounding principles of the Charter. If there is any virtue in trusteeship, then it must be applied to all territories concerned whether the Mandatory Power chooses or does not choose to submit to it. This may be going beyond the terms of the Charter, but I see no reason why our delegates should not make this position perfectly clear. Plain speaking in these high-placed assemblies will clear the air for

all concerned, and if any decision is made against our wishes in the matter, at any rate our voice will have been raised against it.

7. It is obvious that joint administration by two or more authorities is a very undesirable course. It is better to have a single administration by a single authority, but while that may be more feasible in some ways, it has its obvious dangers in creating vested interests. If the administering authority is the U.N.O. itself or its Trusteeship Council, that does not mean that a mixed crowd of officials from all countries will administer the territory. It means that the direct responsibility will lie with the Trusteeship Council even though this may be exercised by a particular group of officials of its choice which should necessarily be chosen so as to pull together as a team and have common objectives.

8. Annexation of a mandated territory is of course to be resisted at all costs....

12. To M.C. Chagla[1]

New Delhi
3rd October 1946

My dear Chagla,

I am very glad indeed that you have agreed to join our U.N.O. delegation.[2] We want to make a splash at this General Assembly meeting of the U.N.O. and to put our case as strongly as possible.

I have seen a letter addressed by you to my colleague in this Department, Major Fry. I think you have been a little unjust in accusing us of delay or any kind of inefficiency.[3] As a matter of fact we have dealt with these

1. M.C. Chagla Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The Indian delegation to U.N.O. consisted of Vijayalakshmi Pandit, M.C. Chagla, Maharaj Singh, Frank Anthony and Nawab Ali Yavar Jung; K.P.S. Menon, V.K. Krishna Menon, P.N. Sapru and R.M. Deshmukh were alternate delegates. The delegation was led by Vijayalakshmi Pandit.
3. Chagla in his letter of 30 September 1946 had complained about delays in getting his passport and foreign currency and lack of response to his communications.

matters with speed. You must remember that references have to be made to other authorities before we can have all the facts. We are having all manner of difficulties in getting enough air accommodation. There are also difficulties in regard to stay in London *en route* for the U.S.A. Gradually we are overcoming them. There are so many commissions and international committees being held abroad that the outgoing planes are completely full. There are a great many details which have to be attended to. All this has been done and is being done as rapidly as possible. Your passport I understand has been sent to the American Commissioner's office here for a visa. So I hope you will appreciate that we are doing our best to facilitate your journey and make all necessary arrangements for it.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

13. Message to the First Conference of the U.N.E.S.C.O.[1]

It gives me much pleasure to send good wishes and greeting on behalf of the people of India to the delegates assembled at the first conference of the U.N.E.S.C.O. I hope their deliberations will bring a word of hope to the people of every land, for education, science and culture are the potent forces which will shape our future.[2] The delegates at the U.N.E.S.C.O. are among the world's intellectual leaders and if they follow their path with courage and faith U.N.E.S.C.O. may well become a symbol of the moral quality of mankind. I wish them every success in their high endeavour.

1. New Delhi, 15 October 1946. File No. 42(12)/48-PMS.
2. The first session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, attended by representatives of 44 nations, opened in Paris on 19 November 1946.

14. Election to U.N. Bodies[1]

This matter[2] was considered fully in Cabinet and the various possibilities discussed. The brief was not passed without full consideration. We should therefore abide by this brief allowing discretion to our delegation to vary their approach if occasion demands it. I agree that we cannot possibly commit ourselves about the future.[3] We should keep our hands free.

1. Note, 25 October 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 6(58)-cc/46, pp. 28-31/ notes, National Archives of India.
2. It was proposed that, in view of the remote prospect of a vacancy occurring on the Trusteeship Council, the Indian delegation be instructed to concentrate only on India's election to the Security Council.
3. Weightman disapproved of a suggestion from the Secretary of State for India that if India failed to get elected to the Security Council despite British support, "she should not stand next year and that she should cooperate in securing Canada's election."

15. Indian Troops Abroad[1]

We have already instructed our delegation[2] to the United Nations General Assembly not to oppose the Russian proposal asking for information about troops in foreign countries other than ex-enemy countries. We have also told them the actual numbers of Indian troops stationed abroad[3] in this way and said that though they should not volunteer this information, in case the Assembly wants this information it might be given. In view of what the Defence Department say[4] we might inform our delegation that the actual

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 28 October 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 6(99)-cc/46, p. 9, National Archives of India.
2. On 23 October 1946 the Indian delegation was informed that India disliked the presence of her troops in 'enemy' countries and was in the process of withdrawing them.
3. Troops were sent to Indonesia under the Supreme Allied Commander's orders to disarm the Japanese and evacuate Allied nationals. Presence of troops in Iraq was covered by Iraqi-British Treaty. Some 8500 of them were sent in August 1946 to protect British and Indian interests and lives in Abadan.
4. G.S. Bhalja, Secretary, Defence Department, had noted on 28 October 1946 that it would be unwise to disclose the strength of Indian troops abroad particularly in Iraq.

figures should not be given without further reference to us. This would depend upon the final decision of the United Nations General Assembly in the matter. But it should be made perfectly clear that we are not opposed to the Russian proposal asking for general information on this subject. If the United Nations Assembly approves of this proposal, then we can consider what information should be given in common with other countries. There is no need for us to volunteer the information when we do not know what the final decision will be and how other countries will react to it. It should also be stated before the United Nations General Assembly that we are not in favour of Indian troops being kept abroad for any purpose and in fact we are withdrawing them rapidly from Indonesia[5] and hope to do so from other places also.

2. In answer to the question in the Assembly (which I have not seen) it may be said that our definite policy is to withdraw Indian troops from abroad. In fact we are withdrawing them from Indonesia immediately. It is not customary for safety and other reasons to give the number of troops stationed anywhere. The matter is coming up before the United Nations General Assembly and if that Assembly decides on such information being given, we shall reconsider the matter. It is also difficult to give exact figures when a process of withdrawal is going on.

5. It was hoped that withdrawal from Indonesia would be completed by the end of November 1946.

16. Telegram to R.N. Banerjee[1]

Your telegram[2] twentysixth. Congratulate delegation on their preliminary success. All India watching with anxious interest this fight for India's honour

1. 28 October 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 6(22)-cc/46, Serial No. 32, National Archives of India.
2. In his telegram of 26 October, Banerjee reported that the proposal of Smuts to remove the South African Indian question from the final agenda had been rejected and it was left to the Assembly to decide on the action to be taken.

and protection of interests of Indians abroad. Grateful for support of Soviet, Ukraine, China, U.S.A., France and Syria.

17. India at the United Nations[1]

Sir, it is surely a strange way of conveying that quantum or strength of feeling[2] by condemning the Government and by making them feel perhaps in South Africa that Government are not doing what they should do in the matter. As a matter of fact, as you yourself remarked, a very great deal has been done in this matter and I shall be very glad indeed if the Honourable Mover Sardar Mangal Singh could tell us what more we could do and in what directions we could pursue this matter further, short of sending an army across from here for purposes of war. At the present moment, as the House no doubt knows, the matter is before the United Nations General Assembly, and I may say that the delegation we have sent have already justified themselves not only by the great ability with which they have conducted the fight in the preliminary rounds but also by a certain measure of success that they have already achieved. I do not wish to mention names or say that some people have done better than others, but so far two names stand out prominently, the names of the Leader of the delegation and Mr. Chagla who very ably conducted the legal part of the argument there and who won his point in spite of stout opposition.[3] I may also express in this connection our gratitude to the other nations who supported us, notably the Soviet, the U.S.A., China, Syria, Ukraine and France; I do not remember all, but only last night we received in our office a long telegram

1. Speech on a motion to discuss the "inability of the Government of India to prevent humiliating treatment being meted out to Indians in South Africa at the hands of the Union Government", 28 October 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VII, 1946, 28 October 1946 - 11 November 1946, pp. 96-97.
2. The President had remarked that the intention of the motion was to convey to the South African Government the strength of Indian feeling on the question.
3. On Chagla's insistence on the political nature of the issue the matter was referred to a joint Political and Legal Committee. He had disputed the Steering Committee's authority to consider the issue and also opposed the move to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice.

giving us some details of those arguments before the United Nations Assembly and telling us of the significant success that our delegation has achieved in this preliminary round and of the great sympathy of the various nations represented in the Assembly for India and for Indians in South Africa. Therefore I think that in the United Nations Assembly the position will go in our favour, but whether it goes in our favour or not we shall stand by our countrymen in South Africa to the end.

18. To Iven Mackay[1]

Dated 30.10.46

Dear Sir Iven,[2]

Many thanks for the copy of the telegram[3] dated the 22nd October 1946, from External, Canberra, which you kindly sent to me the other evening.

I presume it is the answer to a telegram in much the same sense as one we received recently from H.M.G., asking for the Government of India's views on the "veto" issue, and it occurs to me that you might care to have an idea of the answer we gave.

Briefly, it was that India attaches the greatest importance to the continuance of U.N.O. and to the need for the Great Powers cooperating within it; for that reason, however much she might dislike the use of the "veto" except on very rare and special occasions, she would not support any proposal which might serve to intensify the present tension between the Great Powers or result in the withdrawal of any of them from the United Nations. In consequence, India's delegation to the General Assembly has been briefed to oppose the Cuban proposal on the ground that it is too soon to convene a conference to review or amend the Charter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 6(77)-cc/46, pp. 22-23, National Archives of India.
2. Iven Giffard Mackay (1882-1966); Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, Australia, 1941-42; High Commissioner to India, 1944-48.
3. Australia proposed to move a resolution requesting that "permanent members of the Security Council shall refrain from exercising their power of veto except in cases under chapter 8 of the charter."

19. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
30th October, 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have just received your letter of the 30th October regarding the Indian delegation to the General Assembly of the U.N.O.[2] The delegates appointed by us number five. We cannot add to that, as that is the fixed number. Nor can I ask any one of our delegates to retire or resign at this stage. That would be extreme discourtesy and likely to be resented by the entire delegation.

You will notice that in choosing our delegates we have not paid the slightest attention to party representation. Apart from Mrs. Pandit there is no one else who can be considered to be associated with the Congress. There are two eminent Muslims, one Indian Christian, who has served as High Commissioner in South Africa and the leader of the Anglo-Indian community. Among the alternate delegates, Mr. K.P.S. Menon is a very senior officer of the External Affairs Department. Mr. R.M. Deshmukh was till recently the High Commissioner in South Africa. Mr. Krishna Menon is a person somewhat associated with pro-Congress activities in England, but apart from this an able student of foreign affairs. Mr. P.N. Sapru is the leader of the Liberal Party in India.

At an early stage we had invited Syed Raza Ali to become one of our delegates. He had been invited as a specialist in South African Indian affairs, also as a prominent member of the Muslim League. He expressed his inability to join.

I would gladly include representatives of the Muslim League in foreign delegations, but it is a dangerous principle to change a delegation already formed and functioning. All these people who have gone to the General Assembly of the U.N.O. on our behalf have been carefully briefed and they have taken a lot of trouble to prepare themselves for the work there. They were not chosen at all from the party point of view, but for special competence. I am quite sure that if I took any step to change the character of the delegation by asking any one or more of its members to retire, this would be resented by the entire delegation and it may injure our whole cause before the General Assembly of the U.N.O.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Wavell told Liaquat Ali Khan that it was unwise to attempt to increase the number of delegates to U.N.O.; if he wanted any change in the number of representatives to U.N.O. he should discuss the matter with Nehru.

There is another aspect to be considered. Begum Shah Nawaz[3] and Mr. Ispahani[4] have gone to New York on a propaganda mission on behalf of the Muslim League. It appears from the newspapers that they have publicly functioned as party agents and propagandists.[5] They have criticised, in strong language, the Congress as well as the Interim Government. It would be distinctly odd to translate overnight party propagandists into national delegates of the Interim Government.

I am aware that the India Office were specially interested in facilitating their visit to New York. Why this was so at the time I do not quite know, except that it was in conformity with the general policy of H.M.G. Naturally, we did not put any difficulty or obstruction in the way of Begum Shah Nawaz or Mr. Ispahani going to New York. But they went definitely on behalf of a party.

Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon had also been invited by *The New York Herald Tribune* to participate in the "Forum" discussion in which Begum Shah Nawaz and Mr. Ispahani have taken part. We asked Mr. Krishna Menon to withdraw from this "Forum" on his appointment as our alternate delegate. As this rather upset arrangements already made by the "Forum" we told Mr. Krishna Menon that he may speak there, provided he did not function in a party manner and did not criticize the Muslim League in any way, although representatives of the Muslim League were there to put forward their party point of view.

You will appreciate my difficulty in making any changes in the present Indian delegation to the General Assembly of the U.N.O. What has been done cannot be undone without serious consequences, but in future, naturally, we shall pay every attention to the views of our colleague, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, in such matters.

3. Jahanara Shah Nawaz; daughter of Muhammad Shafi; Vice-President, Social Refoms Conference, Lahore, 1929; delegate to the Round Table Conference, 1930-31, 1932-33 and Joint Select Committee, 1933; Vice-President, All India Muslim League, November 1933; Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly; Member, National Defence Council, 1941; Member, Pakistan Constituent Assembly.
4. Mirza Abol Hassan Ispahani (1902-1981); businessman of Calcutta; Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, 1937-47; Joint Secretary, Bengal Provincial Muslim League, 1936-37; Vice-Chairman, Pakistan Delegation to U.N. General Assembly, 1947; Ambassador to U.S.A., 1947-52; High Commissioner for Pakistan in Britain, 1952-54; Minister of Commerce and Industries, 1954-55.
5. For example, participating in a debate organized by *The New York Herald Tribune* forum in New York, Ispahani said on 28 October 1946: "It (Muslim League) stands irrevocably committed to Pakistan and its new decision simply means that the struggle for Pakistan will now be carried on within as well as outside the Government."

May I also point out to you that it is rather odd for a colleague of ours to address us or me through you. That is not likely to prove helpful in future.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. India and the Membership of the Security Council[1]

The decision of the Cabinet in regard to India seeking election for the various councils of the U.N.O. is quite clear. At that time it appeared that there was likely to be no election to the Trusteeship Council. The Cabinet, however, considered it very important that India should stand for and, if possible, get elected to the Security Council; further that India should also, if occasion arose, stand for the Trusteeship Council. The Cabinet was so anxious that India should stand for the Security Council that they stated that this should be done regardless of success or not. India can no longer take up an attitude other than that demanded by her geographical position, by her great potential and by the fact that she is the pivot round which the defence problems of the Middle East, the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia revolve. Even in the course of the last war this dominant position of India was obvious.

2. Thus it is clear that the Cabinet decision demands India's standing for the Security Council whatever other developments might take place. It was pointed out then that there is a convention which might come in the way of India standing for membership of additional councils as she was already a member of the E. & S. Council. We suggested that every effort should be made to get over this convention and that H.M.G. should be asked to help us in this matter. The basic decision, as I understood it, was that we must stand for the Security Council as also, if possible, for the Trusteeship Council. It is possible that this decision might not be to the liking of some other nations. Nevertheless India could not willingly be treated as a second-rate nation in spite of her dominant position which in every way qualifies her for the Security Council.

1. Note, 30 October 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 6(58)-cc/46, pp. 37-39/ notes, National Archives of India.

3. I feel, therefore, that we cannot give up the Security Council if we are to adhere to the Cabinet decision and to the position we have thus far taken up. It appears that this possible conflict between our continuing in the E. & S. Council and our standing for the Security Council came up for consideration last month. In an express letter dated the 15th September to Major Fry from Mr. Sen it was stated that "Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai strongly advocates India's entry into Security Council even at the cost of losing representation in Economic and Social Council. Kirpalani[2] and I agree. Does Government of India support this move?" In our answer we emphasised that India should seek election to Security Council, but we did not clearly say what should be done if we had to choose between the two councils.

4. The telegram from the Leader of the Indian delegation dated 27th October says that it is still hoped that the unwritten agreement in the way of a country's membership of both Security and E. & S. Councils will be modified. If not, then a choice has to be made and the choice they recommend is in favour of joining the Security Council even if this involves resignation from the E. & S. Council. This view of the delegation must obviously be given full weight for they are on the scene of action and are in the best position to judge what should be done. The delegation includes, *inter alia*, Mr. K.P.S. Menon who has been in intimate touch with the views of the E.A. Department. Undoubtedly, therefore, the Leader's proposal may be considered to be also Mr. K.P.S. Menon's proposal. This proposal fits in as nearly as possible with the Cabinet decision. The Cabinet did not expressly state that we should resign from the E. & S. Council, but it might be legitimately presumed, from their great emphasis on membership of the Security Council, that they prefer this to the other.

5. What Major Fry and Mr. Weightman say is obviously of importance,[3] but I think this does not fit in with the Cabinet decision already made. Obviously we want to be members of both the councils, in fact of all three. We hope that the convention will go and there will be no difficulty. If there

2. M.K. Kirpalani; joined the Indian Civil Service, 1926; was Magistrate, Collector and District and Sessions Judge in various districts in Bengal; Joint Secretary, Ministry of States, 1948; Deputy High Commissioner, Karachi, 1948-50; Ambassador in Thailand, 1952-53; Chief Commissioner, Ajmer, 1954-56; Chief Commissioner, Pondicherry, 1956-58; Ambassador in Brazil, 1958-61.

3. They did not favour the idea of India resigning from the Economic and Social Council in order to secure election to the Security Council. It would cause resentment among some nations and India could do greater service to the world by whole-hearted co-operation with the Economic and Social Council. India might also be thought opportunist and unappreciative of the claims of stability.

is this difficulty, then the choice has to be made, and to give up the Security Council would be definitely contrary to the Cabinet decision. I do not think there is any question of India being opportunist in this matter.

6. *It would have been desirable to place this matter before the Cabinet* so that they may have another chance to decide as to what we should do. But the matter is urgent and probably the Cabinet cannot consider this for the next few days, and we have to give our instructions to our delegation immediately. I suggest, therefore, that we should inform our delegation that every effort should be concentrated on securing withdrawal of the unwritten agreement preventing one country's membership of both councils and on obtaining maximum support for India's candidature for the Security Council. This effort can be made at this end too through the American Commissioner. But in the event of failure, the proposal made by the delegation is approved. The delegation may be asked to try to postpone such a decision if they can so that we have time to consult the Cabinet again. But, if this is not possible, they should proceed in accordance with their own suggestions.

21. Telegram to R.N. Banerjee[1]

... It is not clear which Committee is being persuaded by U.K. and U.S.A. to refer legal aspects to International Court of Justice.[2] Under Article 96 only General Assembly itself or the Security Council may make a request for advisory opinion. If any other Committee is to make such a request it should be specially authorised by the General Assembly. I agree however that the move that you mention is a dilatory one and should certainly be opposed on the lines stated by you.

1. 15 November 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 6(22)-cc/46, Serial No. 33-B, National Archives of India. Extracts.
2. In his telegram of 12 November 1946, Banerjee had referred to information that the U.K. and the U.S.A. would sidetrack the South African Indian issue by "persuading committee to refer its legal aspects to Court of International Justice." The Indian delegation proposed to oppose such a move on grounds that the issue was not complex and that it was capable of decision by the committee.

22. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

New Delhi
19 November 1946

Nan dear,
I have just received your cable dated 18th November. I think you should stay on in New York at least till the South African Indian matter has been disposed of. A few days' delay in your return will not matter much. Though, of course, there are important things to attend to here, it is better to finish the job you are dealing with now. I am sending you a telegram accordingly.

2. Jinnah has been trying his best to get the Constituent Assembly meeting postponed. This produced a crisis and we made it quite clear to the Viceroy that we would not accept any postponement. The Viceroy has now agreed, probably under instructions from London, that the Constituent Assembly should meet on the date fixed for it, i.e., December 9th. Invitations will probably be issued tomorrow. This meeting is scheduled to last till the 20th or 21st December. At this preliminary meeting various committees will be formed, the procedure laid down, and may be some general directions given. It will then adjourn probably to meet again at the beginning of April. Meanwhile some committees will function. It can't meet much earlier because of the Budget session of the Central Assembly which begins on January 20th and ends by 31st March. It is not quite clear yet whether the Muslim League will attend this session of the Constituent Assembly or not. I think they will in spite of all their protests. Even if they do not attend, we shall carry on. Of course if they do not come in, it will be difficult to justify their remaining in the Constituent Assembly.

3. I should like you to attend the Constituent Assembly, but I am sure that it is more important for you to finish your work in the U.N.O. You need not stay till the very end of the U.N.O. General Assembly, but you should see the South African issue through.

4. I wrote to you that we were going to consider in Cabinet here the question of appointing Krishna Menon as the Government of India's representative to explore informally the establishment of diplomatic relations with some countries in Europe; also to send K.P.S. Menon to Moscow to carry on further conversations on an official level. This matter was to come up before the Cabinet tomorrow, but the Viceroy, who has just returned from the Frontier, has informed me that he hasn't read the papers yet and,

1. J.N. Collection.

therefore, he has taken this matter out of the agenda of the next meeting, the real reason being that he wants to bring in the Muslim League somewhere into this picture. So the decision has been delayed. It may take another week. I am likely to be away in Meerut for the Congress session for the rest of this week.

5. Please inform Krishna Menon and K.P.S. Menon of this.

With love from

Jawahar

23. U.N. Resolution on South Africa[1]

On behalf of my colleagues and myself I send you and the members of our delegation warm congratulations on your success in the United Nations General Assembly on the passage of the resolution on Indians in South Africa.[2]

By passing this resolution, the General Assembly has not only vindicated India's honour but has shown itself a guardian of human rights. This is full of hope for the future of the United Nations Organisation and for civilisation.

We would like you to convey to the representatives of all nations who voted for us[3] our sense of deep appreciation and gratitude and our hope that we shall cooperate together in the great issues that confront the world with a view to furthering the cause of peace, freedom and civilised progress everywhere.

To you, personally, we offer our greetings and our warm appreciation of your brilliant leadership. It is fitting that a daughter of India should have represented so ably the new India which is taking shape. Your success is a happy augury for the Constituent Assembly which began its session today.

1. Message to Vijayalakshmi Pandit, New Delhi, 9 December 1946. *National Herald*, 10 December 1946.
2. The joint French-Mexican resolution passed by the U.N. General Assembly on 8 December 1946 said that the "treatment of Indians in the Union should be in conformity with international obligations under the agreements concluded between the two Governments and the relevant provisions of the Charter." It also requested "the two Governments to report to the next session of the Assembly the measures adopted to this effect."
3. China, Soviet Union, Philippines, Panama, France, Mexico, Uruguay, Egypt and Poland.

24. Disarmament[1]

Mr. Trevelyan has written an excellent note[2] but the preamble to it[3] indicates a certain lack of enthusiasm on India's part for the idea of disarmament. It is clear that we cannot give any useful direction till we know what the details of any proposal are. Nevertheless India should take up a more definite and positive line on the subject of disarmament. In our delegation's telegram of 4/11/46[4] it is stated that they will ask for more detailed instructions in due course. Meanwhile they want our indication of the Government's general attitude. That general attitude should be clearly stated to be one favouring disarmament. India will support every reasonable and feasible step which furthers disarmament. Not merely because she needs all her resources for intended development etc but also because she considers war and armaments an evil, more especially with the coming of the atom bomb and all its progeny.

It is perfectly true that the path to disarmament is beset with pitfalls and difficulties, both practical and psychological. The history of the League of Nations Disarmament Conferences[5] makes dismal reading. Only an optimist can hope for better results in the near future. Yet when the question is put squarely the answer also should be clear. In working out that answer innumerable difficulties will arise. Obviously this, like many other questions. depends on the Great Powers whose armaments count, and the opinion of India and other like countries is likely to be treated as somewhat academical. Even so, I think that opinion should be clearly expressed when occasion for it arises.

1. Note, 12 December 1946. File No. 6(107)-cc/46, pp. 4-5. National Archives of India.
2. Trevelyan's note of 7 November 1946 said that as India needed all the available resources for internal development it would cooperate in any proposal for reduction of armaments and would welcome any agreement among the Great Powers for reduction of armaments which would contribute to the removal of suspicions and fears. However, effective disarmament could not take place until the Security Council had established on a strong basis its positive machinery for preserving peace.
3. Trevelyan had said that the Government would be unable to give useful directions until they had details of the Soviet proposals with some indication of the reactions of other members.
4. The delegation had requested for instructions on a Soviet proposal for reduction of armaments.
5. The disarmament conferences were held at Washington in 1921 and at Geneva in 1932.

For the rest Mr. Trevelyan's argument as in (i) (ii) and (iii)[6] is valid and has to be borne in mind.

6. (i) Reduction of armaments is clearly one of the most important objectives of the U.N.O.; (ii) the Security Council is responsible for preparation of disarmament plans under Articles 26 and 43; (iii) while India would welcome any agreement among the Great Powers for disarmament, the Security Council should first establish a strong machinery for preserving peace.

25. The Human Rights Commission[1]

I have very little to add to the brief.[2] It seems to me that the Human Rights Commission should deal with the subject in its broadest aspects and not consider particular cases. We must take our stand on equality of opportunity for all peoples and races. This is often referred to as race equality. But this is hardly a correct phrase. The point is that there should be no discrimination on grounds of race, religion, etc. Also there should be no discrimination on grounds of sex. We have recently had to face discrimination in South Africa, and in Ceylon and East Africa we are having difficulties. I do not think we can raise these specific issues in the Human Rights Commission though references might be made to them in the course of arguments.

2. The rights of nationals must necessarily differ from those of non-nationals. In either event there should be no discrimination, i.e., all non-nationals should be treated alike. Certain fundamental or human rights must be guaranteed to the non-nationals.

3. The question of nationality is a difficult one, more specially in the countries which have so far belonged to the British Empire or Commonwealth of Nations. I do not suppose that we need go into this question at the Human Rights Commission. Normally speaking a person will not have a dual nationality and he will have to choose.

1. Note, 14 January 1947. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 62-1/47-O.S.III (Vol. I), pp. 5-7/notes, National Archives of India.
2. The brief prepared by the Commonwealth Relations Department dealt with the items on the agenda of the Human Rights Commission, an organ of the Economic and Social Council of the U.N.O., and gave tentative views on the formulation of an international bill of rights.

4. The International Bill of Rights should lay down broad principles which can be applied. Too much detail should be avoided.

5. There is some reference in the brief to everyone having a right to own property.[3] What is meant, I suppose, is that no group should be deprived of any such right which others possess. We cannot object to any kind of legislation, applying to all, which may convert private property to socially owned property.

6. I would suggest that considerable discretion be given to our delegates to deal with questions as they arise. Any important matter should, of course, be referred to us for advice.

3. The brief had suggested that everyone should have the right to own property under general law and "to equality of rights and opportunities for acquisition of property".

26. India and the United States at the United Nations[1]

I have read with interest the note prepared by Azim Husain[2] on the reactions of American officials and the public in America to the activities of the Indian delegation in the United Nations General Assembly.[3] Nearly everything that is written in this report as well as much else have already been brought to my notice by various people connected with the delegation. I am glad, however, to have this further note giving some details and, in particular, references to the American press.

1. Note, 18 January 1947. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Mohammed Azim Husain (b. 1913); son of Fazl-i-Husain; joined I.C.S. in 1937; secretary general to Indian delegation to U.N. General Assembly, 1946; Deputy High Commissioner in London, 1957-60; Ambassador to U.A.R. and Libya, 1960-64; Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, 1965-67; Deputy Secretary General, Commonwealth Secretariat, 1970-78; Adviser, Third World Foundation; author of *Fazl-i-Husain*.
3. American opinion reacted among other things to Vijayalakshmi's remarks about Truman's speech, V.K. Krishna Menon's criticism of the Americans in the Trusteeship Committee and the Indian appreciation of Molotov's speech. Parts of the American press had disliked India's anti-colonial position and regarded her as championing the cause of the blacks in America.

2. In judging of the attitude to be adopted by our representatives abroad, we have to be clear as to our own foreign policy. Obviously we have not developed such a policy yet and our views on foreign affairs lack precision and definiteness. To some extent they are a continuation of British foreign policy; to some extent a reaction against it. For the rest they consist of benevolent intentions for all concerned. An attempt, necessarily vague and incomplete, was made to indicate the general trend of our future foreign policy in my press conference in September last.[4] This was generally welcomed, more specially my statement that we do not intend to align ourselves to any particular group or to indulge in power politics, but that we would have an independent policy of our own. It was easy to say that, but it is much more difficult to put it into practice in the present state of world affairs.

3. As a matter of fact, it is not particularly easy to find out what the foreign policy of any Power is at present, that is to say what its ultimate objective is towards which its policy aims, not a vague objective but something that is realisable and possible. I do not intend in this note to consider this question at any length. Perhaps I may do so later in considering how we should develop our own policy. Briefly it may be said that, the Soviet Union apart, all other countries are pursuing a confused and sometimes contradictory policy even when it is expressed in strong terms. In both the United States and in the United Kingdom, there is fairly considerable opposition to the present trend in foreign affairs. In the U.K. it is probable that opposition to present policies in foreign affairs will make itself effectively felt in the course of the next few months.

4. In essence policies are determined today in relation to the Soviet Union—either that policy aims at closer cooperation with the Soviet Union or looks forward to a conflict with it and prepares for it.

5. India is peculiarly situated in many ways. Apart from this, the fact that we are just emerging in the international field brings difficulties in its train. Actually we are not a Power that counts; potentially we are very much so. Actually, till now, we have been more or less camp-followers of the British Foreign Office. Those bonds still continue and it is not easy to get rid of them. At the same time there is the urge to shape our own policy and sometimes this urge to walk independently is likely to make us say and do things which are not wholly necessary. We have to make it clear to the world that we are not camp-followers of the British.

4. See *ante*, section 9, item 2.

6. Because of this it was decided that we should not take part in the British Commonwealth Conference which preceded the Preparatory International Trade Conference in London.[5] Because of this also a certain reserve has to be observed in Commonwealth meetings.

7. In many ways the position of India is a fairly strong one, whether in the political field or the economic. If other countries, even the greatest of them, have the power to injure us, that action will recoil on them to a large extent. The economic prosperity of the U.K. or the U.S.A. depends to some extent on Indian cooperation. Thus we are in no weak position to be bullied by any Power. We have something valuable to give in the present and our goodwill is even more valuable in the near future, and therefore we are in a strong bargaining position.

8. The Indian delegation to the U.N. Assembly had been given detailed brief and regular instructions were sent to them from time to time. This brief and these instructions were followed closely. They were varied on one or two occasions, but even in these cases the spirit of the instructions was kept. I think they acted rightly on those occasions and if we had been referred to we would have given them the same advice.

9. Much depends on day-to-day developments and it is impossible to provide for them from afar. A certain discretion must inevitably be allowed. We had made it clear, however, what our general policy must be. Thus in the case of the Security Council the Cabinet had considered fully as to whether we should stand for it or not.[6] Most of us thought that there was little chance of our getting in. Yet it was the clear decision of the Cabinet that even if we had no chance whatever, nevertheless we should stand. I am glad we did so regardless of some people's advice to the contrary. Subsequent criticisms about our action in this matter have no point whatever because they ignore our basic approach to this question. We are out not to gain a seat here and there in any committee or council, though we would welcome it if we can get it; but rather to make it clear to the world that we are not going to be trifled with in future. Such an attitude is likely to irritate and to antagonise. But we are prepared to take that risk because in a long view we think it will

5. The first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for a U.N. Conference on Trade and Employment was held at London from 15 October to 25 November 1946 with a view to reducing barriers to world trade and establishing an International Trade Organisation. India was represented by I.I. Chundrigar, Commerce Member in the Interim Government.
6. India's claim to election to the Security Council was emphasised by Vijayalakshmi Pandit on the basis of equitable geographical representation. India later withdrew her nomination to solve the deadlock and Ukraine was elected.

pay. Other countries must realise that the new India has some iron in it. Our diplomacy, though it should have its full complement of good manners and courtesy, is not going to be of the drawing-room variety where essential matters are concerned. The fact that this country or that country does not like it need not make any difference to us if the matter is vital.[7] In particular the Great Powers have developed a habit of trying to patronise others and India is in no mood to be patronised over, much less to suffer threats.

10. Looking at it from a distance what seemed to me an outrageous piece of behaviour was the attitude of the British delegation on the South African question.[8] If I had been a member of our delegation I would have probably reacted to it more strongly than any one did. If any foreign delegation behaves in that manner to us, it cannot expect any cooperation on any plane from us.

11. About one thing I am quite clear—that whatever our attitude on a particular question might be, no representative of India abroad should criticise publicly the domestic or international policy of another country, except insofar as it arises in the course of the discussion; much less must criticism be directed to statements of a Head of a State or to an important official of a State. What Mrs. Pandit said about President Truman's speech was true enough, but it had better not been said by her as she was the head of our delegation.[9] It was unnecessary and unnecessary remarks have always to be avoided.

12. Those of us who have functioned on the public platform and who are used to criticising in public the sayings and actions of leading statesmen find it difficult to remain silent when we function in another capacity. That has to be learnt, and no doubt we shall learn it.

13. The attitude of the American press was probably influenced by other considerations. It was a continuation of their past attitude which has been determined partly by a spate of British propaganda and partly by their own

7. In her speech to the African Academy of Arts and Research Vijayalakshmi Pandit had championed the cause of the blacks in America. On 1 December 1946, speaking at the Council of African Affairs, she said the time had come when the coloured people of the world must stand up and claim what was their own.
8. In regard to the South African proposal to annex South West Africa and the issue of discrimination against Indians in South Africa Britain favoured the South African request that the dispute should be referred to the International Court of Justice.
9. A casual remark of Vijayalakshmi Pandit, "What a disappointment—Roosevelt could have made so much of this occasion", was overheard by a journalist and printed in American newspapers.

urges and wishes. It is not likely to change unless they begin to see light and realise that if the attitude of America is important to India, the attitude of India is equally important to America. Two can play at that game and there is no reason whatever why India should change her attitude or vary her policy in any matter because the American press does not approve of it.

14. For the American press, as so many Americans, the test was whether India inclined towards the Anglo-American bloc or the Soviet bloc. In the nature of things the subjects before the Assembly brought India in closer cooperation with the Soviet bloc.[10] It would have been absurd and impolitic for the Indian delegation to avoid the Soviet bloc for fear of irritating the Americans. A time may come when we may say clearly and definitely to the Americans or others that if their attitude continues to be unfriendly we shall necessarily seek friends elsewhere.

15. The South African issue at the United Nations Assembly was somehow connected distantly with the American Negro problem. For our part we did not intend raising the Negro issue, but it was not possible to tone down our opposition on the South African question because the Americans might feel uncomfortable. Also it has been India's policy to sympathise with African aims. This also is going to continue. India stands today as the leader of Asian and African peoples who are subjected to foreign domination. She cannot give up that role because it is unpalatable to some people.

16. It is desirable for official delegates of the Government of India to avoid participating in functions which deal with controversial domestic politics or with sectarian affairs. Each case will have to be judged on the merits. But if I went to America I have no doubt that I will meet prominent African leaders, notably Mr. Paul Robeson[11] who is not only a personal friend but a person of world reputation. I find in Mr. Azim Husain's note many references to "what created an unfavourable impression on Americans". This fact has relevance and has to be noted for our information and guidance. But what is more important is whether what we did was right or wrong apart from its reaction on certain Americans of position. Probably some of the activities of Mr. Krishna Menon were unwise and it would have been better to avoid close association in public with certain organizations. That must be a matter to be decided in each case separately. But for Mr. Louis Fischer or any one else to object to Mr. Krishna Menon meeting Mr. Molotov at our instance is sheer impertinence.

10. Vijayalakshmi Pandit had expressed appreciation of Molotov's speech of 29 October 1946, wherein he had advocated support and assistance to India.
11. (1898-1976); American negro singer and actor; his passport was impounded in 1950.

17. The conclusion to which Mr. Azim Husain has arrived is that on the whole no irreparable damage has been done. His test of damage is the reactions in the minds of the American public and the irritation of the Anglo-American bloc. Though these facts have to be borne in mind, they are no test of the rightness or wrongness of any action taken by the Indian delegation. The example of China mentioned by Mr. Azim Husain is significant. Chinese behaviour in conferences for some time past has not been very inspiring, and I should not like India to follow suit. My own impression is that the effect of the Indian delegation's activities as a whole, and even apart from the South African issue, has been the kind of effect we wanted to produce. In minor matters mistakes were made, but in all that counts the correct attitude was taken up and we have on the one hand made people realise that we cannot be trifled with and on the other drawn nearer to ourselves many of the smaller countries, notably those of Asia. It is quite possible that the foreign policy of the Interim Government has resulted somewhat in stiffening the attitude of the British Government towards the Congress and India. It was well realised that this would be the effect just as some of our domestic policies have the same effect. Yet if those policies are sound and to our advantage they have to be pursued with vigour.

18. All this leads to the conclusion that India's foreign policy should be carefully considered and, if possible, defined so that all our activities might be correlated to it. Foreign policies, however, do not grow up suddenly. They are built up brick by brick, but the blueprint of the building must be present in the minds of the builders. Generally speaking, foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. India's foreign policy will ultimately depend upon her domestic policy.

27. To M.C. Chagla[1]

New Delhi
20 January 1947

My dear Chagla,

I have been wanting to write to you for a long time. Indeed I wanted to meet you on your return from the U.S.A. And now you have yourself written and made the suggestion that I was going to make.[2]

1. M.C. Chagla Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Chagla had offered on 16 January 1947 to come to see Nehru in Delhi.

My object in writing to you would have been first to thank you for all you did at the U.N. General Assembly meeting. During a somewhat dark period the work of the Indian delegation at the U.N.O. has been a singularly bright and heartening feature.[3]

What you have written about the impression in the U.S.A. is right enough and I have been well aware of it.[4] The situation is a difficult one and it is not so easy to deal with it by a statement. However, we shall have to do something about it and I shall be very happy to have a chance of discussing this and allied matters with you. If you could come up to Delhi for a day or two, we could meet and have a full talk. Asaf Ali could also profit by your experience.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. The two important issues which the Indian delegation handled with success at U.N.O. were opposition to South Africa's request to annex S.W. Africa, and upholding India's appeal regarding discrimination against the Indians by the South African Government.
4. Chagla had said that responsible opinion in the United States felt that a free India would ally itself with the Soviet Union in its foreign policy. The British delegation also held the same opinion.

28. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
28th January 1947

My dear Krishna,

I should like to express to you the Government's most cordial appreciation of the work of you and your colleagues at the General Assembly which has just concluded its session. The session was of course most notable for the impressive victory of India in the discussion on the treatment of Indians in South Africa. This victory, gained only through the great efforts of the delegation, is of vital importance not only to India, but to all countries of the world. In particular the countries of Asia have received a convincing demonstration that the United Nations will be a real force for peace and

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Similar letters were written to the other members of the Indian delegation.

for the improvement of human relations. In mentioning this issue which is of such great importance to us, I by no means overlook the other most valuable work done by the delegation in the numerous Commissions, the discussions in which required from our delegation the same qualities and the same hard work as those issues which have been brought more into the limelight. As a result of the efforts of the delegation the new India has made a most auspicious beginning on the stage of international politics.

Yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

II Relations with Other Countries

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INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

II Relations with Other Countries

1. Foodgrains from Russia[1]

I have read Sir Robert Hutchings' note of the 3rd September[2] and Mr. Weightman's note of the 5th September.[3] The first point is whether any surplus foodgrains exist in Russia, which can be sent to India. Sir Robert Hutchings' note is headed "Rice from Russia". I should imagine that wheat was a more likely commodity in Russia. We do not seem to know much about the position in Russia, but there are some reasons to think that the last harvest was a good one and that there may be an exportable surplus of wheat.

It is apparent from the record that Russian authorities have not been eager to cooperate in this matter, and we are still awaiting a final reply to the message sent to his Government by Mr. Elshin, the Trade Agent of the U.S.S.R. in India. I understand that the Commerce Department sent a reminder to him by telegram yesterday.

Normally, the proper course will be to find out how the matter stood at the other end and then to take necessary steps, if any. But the difficulty arises owing to the delays and the lack of response of the Russian Government. This is no doubt due to the political reasons which influence Russian policy considerably. The question before us too ultimately resolves itself into a political one. Is it desirable to approach Russia directly on a high level and ask the Soviet Government to send us foodgrains? It is possible that there may be no response at all though I think this is highly unlikely, or there may be delay in our receiving an answer. It has been suggested that the answer or a lack of answer may not be in keeping with our dignity or self-respect. There is something in that, but on the whole I do not see any reason why another party's lack of courtesy should prevent us from taking a step which might yield possible results.

Even from the political point of view I think it is desirable that some kind of approach should be made by the Interim Government to the Soviet

1. Note, 6 September 1946. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 20(4)-EUR/47, pp. 7-8/notes, National Archives of India.
2. R.H. Hutchings, Secretary to the Food Department, was doubtful whether the Soviet Union would be willing to receive a food mission from India. He also thought it unlikely that India would get any significant quantity of rice. India might get some wheat but here too it was doubtful whether it could arrive in "sufficient quantities, or in sufficient time."
3. Weightman questioned whether it was wise for India to think of a direct deal with the Soviet Union for India stood little prospect of securing significant quantities of foodgrains from it within an appropriate time, and such supplies as might be received would be secured at a price, political or otherwise, which would be seriously damaging.

Government. It should be a friendly approach though necessarily confined to matters of food. That would not commit us in any way in regard to other matters and at the same time it will show to the Soviet Government that the Indian Government in power is prepared to deal with it in a friendly manner. This might have good results and cannot have bad results.

In the natural course of events India should deal directly with a great country like the Soviet Union which lies on its borders whether we approve of its policy or not. A time is bound to come when we shall have diplomatic representatives there and the Soviet Government will have its own representatives here. If that is so, then the sooner we deal with them directly, the better, and thus pave the way for further contacts on the diplomatic level. How best to bring about these contacts is a matter for consideration. It may be desirable to send a small mission to Russia to sound the Soviet Government both in regard to the food situation and the political situation. Even if this is desirable, some kind of direct telegraphic contact will have to precede it.

I suggest, therefore, that quite apart from the various considerations mentioned in Sir Robert Hutchings' note and Mr. Weightman's note, it would be worthwhile for us to approach directly and on a high level the Soviet Government and ask them for foodgrains. Their reply—or a lack of reply—will itself help us to frame our future policy in regard to them. This matter is of obvious importance, as the Secretary, E.A.D., has pointed out, because of its larger implications. It should therefore be considered by the full Cabinet in a meeting. The matter might also be referred, as suggested, to H.M.G. The Hon'ble Member for Food should be informed of this.

2. Invitation to Inter-Asian Relations Conference[1]

Delhi
7 September 1946

Sir,

At the suggestion of many eminent persons in India and outside, the Indian Council of World Affairs, which is a non-political body devoted to the promotion of international understanding and cooperation, has decided to organize an Inter-Asian Relations Conference consisting of representatives from all Asian countries. It has been decided to hold the Conference

1. External Affairs Department File No. 14(19)-cc/46, Vol. No. I, National Archives of India. Extracts. Nehru was the chairman of the organizing committee of the Inter-Asian Relations Conference.

sometime between February 15 and March 31, 1947 at Delhi or other suitable place in India. The main objects of the Conference will be to review the position of Asia in the post-war world, exchange ideas on the problems which are common to all Asian countries and study the ways and means of promoting closer contacts between these countries. A detailed agenda prepared in consultation with the representatives of the participating countries will be sent later. The following topics have been tentatively suggested by the organisers of this Conference:

(a) National movements for freedom in Asia;
(b) Racial problems with special reference to the root causes of racial conflicts;
(c) Transition from a colonial to a national economy, dictated primarily by national interests, but with due regard to international cooperation;
(d) Inter-Asian emigration and the status and treatment of immigrants;
(e) Welfare problems with special reference to public health and nutrition;
(f) Problems of industrial labour and industrial development;
(g) Cultural problems with special reference to education, art and architecture, scientific research and literature;
(h) The status of women and women's movement in Asia.

Each participating country is being invited to send delegates selected by associations having objects similar to those of the Indian Council of World Affairs (a copy of the memorandum and the rules of the Council is enclosed herewith). In special cases it is also proposed to issue personal invitations to eminent scholars. The Governments of Asian countries are also being requested to send observers.

I seek your cooperation and participation in the work of the Conference. It has been proposed that each participating country may send 8 delegates and 8 alternates. It will be convenient if all associations in your country can come together and send an agreed batch of delegates and alternates. It will also facilitate the work of the Conference if one of the associations can be asked to act as convener for the purpose of corresponding with us in this connection. For your information I enclose herewith a list of associations and individuals in your country to whom I am sending invitations.

I hope it will be possible to send at least one woman delegate from your country who will be able to assist the Conference by presenting the women's point of view on the various matters before the Conference and, in particular, in the discussing of the status of women and women's movements in Asia which is one of the main topics suggested for the agenda.

* * *

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Big Power Rivalry in Japan[1]

It does seem rather odd for us to sit in judgment over the Japanese constitution, especially in regard to details. Mr. Duke's note[2] is adequate—But I would prefer generally our not getting entangled in these matters where they involve rivalries between the Big Powers.[3] The real conflict is usually about some matter which does not appear on the surface and all the opening is unreal. Therefore while putting forward our viewpoint we need not take sides in disputes so far as we can help it.

1. Note, 18 September 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 701(77)-FEA/46, p. 8, National Archives of India.
2. C.B. Duke's note of 13 September 1946 dealt with the question of the authority of the Far Eastern Commission in regard to the Japanese draft constitution, qualifications for electors to the Upper House, the powers of the Upper House and the selection of the prime minister.
3. The Soviet view was that the new constitution could not become law unless the Far Eastern Commission formally approved it, but the U.S. did not think this necessary.

4. Cable to Lord Pethick-Lawrence[1]

19 September 1946

I am approaching you directly in regard to the question of rice from Indonesia.[2] Several telegrams have already been sent to you on this subject and latest sent yesterday by Food Department gives full particulars of existing situation.[3] Food situation in India has grown critical and unless internal

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 542.
2. An agreement for the supply of 700,000 tons of paddy to India against deliveries of Indian consumer goods was signed on 27 July 1946.
3. In its telegram of 17 September 1946, the Food Department gave details of the low figures of cereal rations in the principal rice-eating areas and said that the Madras Government had warned that rice content would have to be further reduced to six ounces unless supplies were received. The telegram of 18 September mentioned that the import position had vitally changed, because of the shipping strike in America, the course of negotiations with Argentina—which showed that India could not expect from that source the immediate grant of export licenses for all the tonnage India had hoped—, and slow and uncertain shipments from Brazil. And, owing to the failure of procurement in Thailand, India was expected to obtain from South East Asia, including Burma, 70,000 tons less than was assumed by the I.E.F.C.

transport problem in Java[4] is satisfactorily solved at once to permit greatly increased supplies consequences may be disastrous.

2. I regard military objections to supply of transport as unconvincing[5] and if these prevail there will be grave repercussions in India where as you know there is great sympathy with Indonesians. Political aspect of question is therefore as important as economic and it would be unfortunate in the extreme if impression were to gain currency that His Majesty's Government preferred to risk starvation in India rather than take negligible military risks involved by providing transport facilities for movement of rice.[6]

3. The Government of India have expressed readiness to send representative or representatives to supervise use of transport by Indonesian Government and to secure any further assurances if desired from Dr. Shahrir.[7] As a last resort am myself prepared to go to Indonesia if necessary. Would earnestly request you to reverse present policy immediately.

4. The problem was with regard to movement of stocks of paddy from the interior to the ports. It was estimated that, with the improvement in internal transport, movement could be increased from 30,000 to 150,000 tons a month.
5. Lord Killearn, Special Commissioner, South East Asia, in his telegram of 9 August 1946, had informed Wavell that the Supreme Allied Commander was unable to consent to the grant of further transport as the transport previously given to Indonesia to remove refugees and rice had been used as transport in anti-allied operations.
6. In his telegram of 20 September, Pethick-Lawrence assured Nehru that a decision would be reached only after fullest account had been taken of all political, economic and military considerations involved. Later, on 25 September 1946, he cabled that the British Government had decided to accept the military risks involved in overruling the views of the military authorities on the supply of motor transport to the Indonesians for the movement of rice.
7. Sultan Shahrir (1909-1966); studied law at Amsterdam from 1929 to 1931; one of the founders of the "New P.N.I."; arrested in 1934 and then sent into exile; freed shortly before the Japanese invasion and organised an underground group; after the Proclamation of Independence, formed three cabinets between November 1945 and June 1947; led the Indonesian Socialist Party throughout the fifties; in prison, 1962-65; died in Zurich, 1966.

5. To W.L. Clayton[1]

In view of very serious food situation[2] in India which is being aggravated by delay in arrival of promised allotments due to shipping strikes in America[3] would earnestly request you and through you the labour leaders to permit and arrange for earliest despatch of food ships to India. We would be very grateful to you and to the labour leaders concerned if they will make a special exception in favour of sending foodgrains abroad which will bring urgently needed relief to millions of people.

1. New Delhi, 20 September 1946. Personal message sent to Clayton, Acting U.S. Secretary of State. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 53-F-E-/46, p. 68, National Archives of India; also printed in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946*, Vol. V, p. 94 (Washington, 1969).
   W.L. Clayton (1880-1966); Assistant Secretary of Commerce, 1942-44; Assistant Secretary of State, 1944-45; Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, 1945-47.
2. The White Paper issued by the British Government on 2 April 1946 said that failure of rains, a cyclone and a tidal wave had resulted in sharp drop in grain production and had increased the estimate of India's imported cereal requirements (wheat or rice) in 1946 from 1,500,000 to over 4,000,000 tons. The stock of foodgrains available in India at this time was hardly sufficient for a month.
3. All American ports were paralysed by a strike by marine workers from 5 to 22 September 1946. India was expecting 224,000 tons of wheat from the U.S.A. in October.

6. To V.M. Molotov[1]

New Delhi
21 September 1946

Dear Monsieur Molotov,

Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon has been requested and authorised by us to convey to you and to the Government of the U.S.S.R. the greetings of the Government of India and the Indian people.

He is being sent as my personal representative as Vice-President of the Interim Government of India and Minister for External Affairs.

It is our earnest desire to develop friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. and to exchange diplomatic and other representatives with your country. We feel that cooperation between India and Russia will be of mutual advantage to both and will be helpful in promoting the peace and progress of the world.

1. J.N. Collection.

India, as you know, is facing a very serious food shortage and there is grave danger of famine in many areas. We would greatly appreciate and welcome your help in this matter if it is possible for you to send foodgrains to India in the immediate future.

Mr. Krishna Menon will explain to you not only the food situation in India but the other considerations which have led us to ask him to meet you. We are passing through a transitional phase in India, but we hope soon to play our full part in world affairs.

Please accept the assurance of our high regard.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. Cable to S.E. Runganadhan[1]

You should certainly support China's recommendation for independence of Libya.[2] Our delegation must always stand for independence of all dependent and colonial areas without exception and any proposal to that end should be supported.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. New Delhi, 23 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 10(9)-cc/46, National Archives of India.
Samuel Ebenezer Runganadhan (1877-1966); Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, 1929-35, and Madras University, 1937-40; adviser to the Secretary of State for India, 1940-43; High Commissioner for India in London, 1943-47.
2. Speaking in the Italian Political Commission of Paris Peace Conference on 23 September 1946, Sig. Bonomi, Italian delegate, declared that Italy had acquired Libya, Eritrea and Somalia decades before fascism, and asked that she should be granted the trusteeship of her former African territories. The Ethiopian delegate demanded that the whole of Eritrea should be ceded to Ethiopia. The Chinese delegate supported Ethiopia's claim to Eritrea and the independence of Libya.

8. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
23 September 1946

My dear Krishna,

I sent you a cable today in cypher through the High Commissioner, London. In this I asked you to convey a message personally to Monsieur Molotov in Paris about our request to Russia for the despatch of foodgrains. The matter is urgent and I hope you will take immediate steps. A similar cable was sent, through the British Embassy, Moscow, to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, whom we requested to forward it to Molotov.

A hitch has occurred regarding your acting as my Personal Representative. This has resulted in delay in sending off the telegram to the Secretary of State for India. The Viceroy saw the papers today and did not like the look of them. I am now placing the matter before our colleagues.

Yesterday, at the meeting of the *Herald* Directors, we decided to start a Delhi edition as soon as it was practicable. We made Feroze a Director in my place and specially entrusted him with this business of expansion and reorganisation.[2] We want to push this thing through as rapidly as possible. I sent a cable to Raghunandan Saran in London and asked him to see you about it.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. On joining the Interim Government in September 1946 Nehru resigned from the chairmanship of the *National Herald.*

9. Cable to V.M. Molotov[1]

New Delhi
23 September, 1946

In view of grave food situation in India and impending famine in many parts of the country we would earnestly appeal to you and your Government

1. It was sent to Krishna Menon for delivery to Molotov in Paris and also to the British Embassy in Moscow for delivery to the Soviet Foreign Office. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7,* Vol. 8, pp. 573-574.

to help us by sending foodgrains to India if this is possible. We have already asked Soviet Trade Commissioner in India to communicate our request to your Government and he informs us that he has done so. Our need is urgent and we would be grateful for this help from a friendly people who are our neighbours and our people would appreciate it greatly.

Please inform me of steps taken by you and possibility of response to our appeal.[2]

2. Molotov told Menon at Paris on 28 September 1946 that the Soviet Government were anxious to assist India but on account of drought their own supplies had been reduced. He said that a final reply could be given only by the Soviet Government.

10. Official Attitude to South African Government[1]

We need not go into fine points of protocol.[2] While it is true that formally we have not severed our diplomatic relations with South Africa in fact we have done so. Courtesy does not require a formal call on a South African representative. I think we should await further developments and meanwhile our representative should not take the initiative in the matter. We need not be too soft with people who treat us in the way the South Africans have done.

1. Note to Foreign Secretary, 23 September 1946. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 79-13/46-O.S.I, p. 9/notes, National Archives of India.
2. When the Indian High Commissioner in Australia enquired whether he should call on the South African High Commissioner in Australia, the office favoured it as it was a matter of pure convention and India had not as yet broken off diplomatic relations with South Africa.

11. The Interim Government and Foreign Policy[1]

H.E.'s note raises important issues. Apart from the merits of the proposal, the suggestion that an important step connected with one of the proposed

1. Note, 24 September 1946. J.N. Collection.

Union subjects should not be taken because there is a prospect of a Coalition means that the present Cabinet or Interim Government of India should merely carry on as a kind of Caretaker Government. That has not been our conception of the Interim Government and indeed we would not have undertaken this responsibility on that basis. We are being faced, and we shall be faced in the immediate future, with important decisions. To postpone consideration or action in regard to them, till a Coalition Government takes shape, would reduce the present Interim Government to a position of impotence. The Government, if it is a government, must face the issues of the day competently, effectively and with speed.

One of the most important issues before us is how to develop our foreign relations and gain direct contacts with other countries. It is not possible to have any effective foreign policy without such contacts and the knowledge based on them. In international conferences we can play no effective role unless we are dealing with foreign countries directly. It seems to me that the proper way to develop contacts and subsequently to establish diplomatic relations, is not to begin with an official and formal approach. The foundation for this must be laid by semi-official and rather informal approaches which do not commit any party and yet which will help to understand each other. This method has many advantages and is the usual method now adopted by many countries. Such countries as have a fairly extensive foreign service and foreign representation have naturally many advantages in the way of developing contacts both official and non-official. In the case of India such a service is lacking and, therefore, it becomes all the more necessary for us to proceed informally and rather warily before taking any formal step. It would be possible for us, of course, to utilise the diplomatic and other foreign representatives of H.M.G. But this would have to be inevitably a formal approach and through channels which will not facilitate our further progress in this direction. That would in effect be a British approach with the background of British foreign policy. It would not bring India any nearer to the countries concerned and we would naturally be looked upon as satellites of the British Foreign Office. It is to be noted that recently, when the State Department of the U.S.A. informed us that they wanted to raise the status of their representative in India to the ambassadorial level,[2] they made it clear that they wanted direct contacts with us and not through H.M.G. Further they stated that they were making this new approach because of the establishment of the new Interim Government in India. The coming of this Interim Government has obviously made a difference in the

2. Girja Shankar Bajpai was Agent General in the U.S.A. as George Merrell was U.S. representative in India. On 24 October 1946 both the diplomatic missions were raised to the level of embassies.

outlook of foreign countries in regard to India. This is in the fitness of things and we should take full advantage of it.

As I have stated above, if we send an official emissary, we take a formal step which commits us before we know exactly what the position is in regard to a particular country. That would hardly be a wise beginning. It seems to me a far safer policy to avoid commitments, to explore the possibilities of developing diplomatic relations, to find out informally the reactions of other countries, and then, with this information before us, to come to some decisions which may lead to more formal approaches.

This procedure commits nobody and cannot possibly be objected to by a subsequent Government or by H.M.G. unless H.M.G. object in principle to our having any direct contacts with foreign countries. Such an objection would be untenable in present circumstances and would be contrary to the policy we have already enunciated in regard to our foreign relations.

If we are not to deal with the proposed Union subjects and we may not touch the field of provincial autonomy, then what exactly is left for the Interim Government apart from certain border-line activities of no great importance?

As for the timing of this proposal, that timing would apply to every proposal at the present juncture. There may be criticism of it, but I do not see how that criticism can be justified or how it will be damaging to the Cabinet or to the Congress. There is likely to be much more criticism, which will be justified, if we wait supinely for events to happen and do not take any effective step lest it be criticised.

One of the objects of this proposal was to investigate possibilities of obtaining foodgrains from abroad. Obviously this is an urgent matter which can no longer be dealt with effectively on the official and formal level which has been tried already. As a matter of fact we sent a telegram to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Moscow, yesterday conveying a message to Monsieur M. Molotov appealing for the despatch of foodgrains. This message was sent through the British Embassy, Moscow. I felt, however, that such a formal message might not produce results and so we sent the same message, through the High Commissioner, London, to Mr. Krishna Menon and requested him to deliver it personally to Monsieur Molotov in Paris.

It is usual now to have Personal Representatives who, though necessarily invested with some authority, can work unofficially and informally.

I have already consulted my colleagues about this proposal, though they have not seen these papers or the draft telegram. In the circumstances I think it would be desirable for them to consider this matter more fully and see these notes. H.E. might be informed of this and a copy of this note sent to him.

12. Cable to Aga Khan[1]

Thank you for your cable. We entirely agree with your general approach. India stands for independence of all colonial and dependent people and full right of self determination. We hold sovereignty must rest with the people of the country. If for any reason immediate independence not feasible then United Nations trusteeship for brief period aiming at independence. We are opposed to mandates of old type or to any single nation acting as trustee. In regard to ex-Italian colonies we shall gladly welcome recognition of independence and in case United Nations trusteeship India, Egypt and Arab states should be associated. There is no question of Hindu or Muslim in this matter. All Asians and people of dependent countries stand together for freedom and emancipation from foreign control which only can help in bringing about world peace and progress. I welcome your message and appreciate your sentiments. India stands not only for her own independence but for freedom of all countries especially those who have been deprived of it.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. 25 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 10(9)-cc/46, Serial No. 18, National Archives of India.

13. An Independent Foreign Policy[1]

In the sphere of foreign affairs, India will follow an independent policy, keeping away from the power politics of groups aligned one against another. She will uphold the principle of freedom for dependent peoples and will oppose racial discrimination wherever it may occur. She will work with other peace-loving nations for international cooperation and goodwill without exploitation of one nation by another.

1. Interview to the press, New Delhi, 26 September 1946. From *The Hindustan Times*, 27 September 1946.

It is necessary that, with the attainment of her full international status, ndia should establish contact with all the great nations of the world and hat her relations with neighbouring countries in Asia should become still loser. Towards this end it is proposed to despatch a goodwill mission to he Middle East and to establish contacts, which will in the first instance e informal, with countries of both western and eastern Europe. It is also proposed to station an Indian Consul at Bangkok[2] and a Vice-Consul at Saigon[3] in the near future.

So far as her near neighbours are concerned, India will watch with close nterest the development of events in Palestine,[4] Iran,[5] Indonesia,[6] China,[7] Siam[8] and Indo-China,[9] as well as in the foreign possessions in India itself[10] with every sympathy with the aspirations of the peoples of these lands for the attainment of internal peace, freedom—where they lack it—and of their due place in the comity of nations.

2. Bhagwat Dayal was appointed Consul for India in Thailand in November 1946.
3. A.N. Mehta was appointed Vice-Consul and later Consul for India in Saigon on 2 July 1947.
4. In August 1945, President Truman appealed to Attlee for immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine, which was under British mandate. Later, an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was set up and on 20 April 1946 it recommended the continuation of the Government of Palestine under the mandate and admission of 100,000 Jews, who were victims of Nazi persecution. The resultant plan made further Jewish immigration dependent upon Jewish and Arab consent.
5. While the central government in Iran was confronted with a rebellion in the northern province of Azerbaijan on the issue of autonomy, labour troubles in the oilfields in Abadan resulted in an Indian brigade-group being sent to Basra in Iraq to safeguard the British oil interests threatened in southern Iran; and the fate of a crucial oil agreement with the Soviet Union depended on its being ratified by the Iranian parliament, elections for which were impending.
6. In August 1945 Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta proclaimed Indonesia an independent republic, and four years of heavy fighting with the Dutch followed. Under U.N. pressure, an agreement was finally reached in November 1949 for the creation of an independent republic of Indonesia.
7. There were prospects of a civil war in China. Negotiations between President Chiang Kai-shek and Zhou En-lai continued with the mediation of General George C. Marshall, President Truman's special representative in China.
8. Thailand was involved in a dispute with France on the question of the retrocession of certain territories to Indo-China which Thailand had obtained in 1941 with Japanese aid.
9. In Vietnam, the Vietminh had proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in August 1945 with Ho Chi Minh as the President. Although a *modus vivendi* was signed with the French on 14 September 1946, the Vietminh forces continued their attacks against the French authorities in Indo-China.
10. The foreign possessions in India consisted of Goa, Daman and Diu under the Portuguese and Pondicherry, Chandernagore, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam under the French.

With the U.S.A. and China, India already has a form of diplomatic contact. The relations thus already existing will, it is hoped, shortly be strengthened by the exchange of representations on an independent diplomatic footing.[11]

The first step necessary for India's separate representation abroad is the creation of an Indian Foreign Service to man diplomatic, consular and commercial posts in foreign countries as well as countries in the British Empire.

Plans have already been drawn up for the creation of this Service and for the recruitment and training of its members, and it is hoped that these will shortly be placed before the Cabinet for approval. The implementation of these plans must, however, take a little time because of the number and complexity of the practical issues involved.

It is a relatively simple matter to recruit young men to a service, train them and appoint them to junior posts from which they may gradually work their way up. But it is estimated that we shall require over 300 persons to man posts from the topmost grade down to the lowest, while the number of Indian officials possessing the requisite experience is barely a sixth of that number.

Recruitment will, therefore, have to be spread over persons in several different age groups, and the experience and qualifications of each candidate will have to be taken into account not only in judging his suitability for the Service, but, after selection, in deciding what further training, if any, he should undergo.

The period of India's separate representation abroad must begin with the best material available and care will be taken to ensure that persons in all walks of life who possess the requisite qualifications are able to offer themselves for selection. The training of the older recruits will necessarily be brief, because they will be required to take up appointments as soon as possible; but it is intended that new recruits should receive instruction in such subjects as economics, world history, international affairs and foreign languages, and to spend a part of their training period at a foreign university. Other matters of detail, such as salaries and allowances, the syllabus of the entrance examination, etc., are still under consideration.

At present there are Indian diplomatic officials in the U.S.A. and China, High Commissioners in Australia[12] and South Africa[13] (the latter being at

11. By an announcement in October 1946, diplomatic relations with China were raised to the level of embassies.
12. R.P. Paranjpye (1876-1966); President, National Liberal Federation of India, 1924 and 1939; High Commissioner for India in Australia, 1944-47; Vice-Chancellor of Pune University, 1956-59.
13. Ramrao Madhaorao Deshmukh.

present in India), Representatives in Burma,[14] Ceylon[15] and Malaya[16] and Trade Commissioners in several countries. With the creation of the new Service, the existing posts will be strengthened and new ones created. It will be necessary to work out a system of priorities, but obviously first consideration must be given to countries with which we already have contacts and to our neighbours in the east as well as in the west.

The Government propose as soon as practicable to examine, in consultation with all the interests concerned, the problem of the tribal areas of the north-west frontier. The question is one of all-India importance for the tribes are the guardians of the northern doorway to India and the security and well-being of these areas is therefore a definite factor in the defence of this country.

I should like to make it quite clear that in reviewing the problem there is no intention whatever of depriving the tribes of their existing freedom which they have defended so zealously and valiantly for many years; still less to impose any scheme on them against their will. It follows that the Government's approach to the problem will be essentially a friendly one seeking, in cooperation and consultation with the tribes, ways and means of solving their economic difficulties, promoting their welfare generally and bringing them into a happy and mutually beneficial association with their neighbours in the settled districts.

I have said that the question is one of all-India importance. So it is. But there is a wider aspect to it than this. The tribal areas of the north-west frontier lie along an international frontier—the frontier which divides India from its friendly neighbour, Afghanistan. From this situation arises an international obligation, for our friends, the Afghans, look to us to preserve peace and order in the tribal areas in the interests of the tranquillity of their own country. They may rest assured that in seeking a new approach to the problem the fullest regard will be paid to our obligations.

It will fall to the Constituent Assembly in consultation with the interests concerned to decide in what way Baluchistan will enter the new Indian body politic and how the Baluchistan of the future will be administered.[17] But in view of the comparative backwardness of political development in Baluchistan the Government are already considering the question of forming as soon as practicable an Advisory Council drawn from representative institutions and organisations in Baluchistan to assist the Agent[18] to the

14. M.A. Rauf replaced Jamnadas Mehta as India's representative in Burma in October 1946.
15. M.S. Aney.
16. S.K. Chettur, I.C.S., was at this time Indian Representative in Malaya.
17. According to the statement of 16 May Baluchistan was put in Section B along with the Punjab, Sind and the N.W.F.P.
18. H.M. Poulton.

Governor-General. This would be a preliminary to the introduction of a fuller democratic system of administration.

It is the intention of the Central Government to consult at every stage the wishes of the inhabitants of Baluchistan and not to ignore such indigenous institutions as the tribal jirgas. It may be necessary in view of local conditions and the wishes of the people there to modify the pattern of democratic institutions which may come into being in the rest of India.

Towards the United Nations Organization India's attitude is that of wholehearted cooperation and unreserved adherence, in both spirit and letter, to the Charter governing it. To that end, India will participate fully in its varied activities and endeavour to play that role in its councils to which her geographical position, population and contribution towards peaceful progress entitle her. In particular, the Indian delegation will make it clear that India stands for the independence of all colonial and dependent peoples and their full right to self-determination.

India's delegation to the forthcoming General Assembly of the United Nations is not yet complete, but invitations to join it have already been accepted by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit,[19] Nawab Ali Yawar Jung, Mr. Justice Chagla, Mr. Frank Anthony, Mr. K.P.S. Menon and Mr. R.M. Deshmukh. Attached to the delegation will be a strong and representative body of advisers.

The most important item on the agenda from India's point of view is the case against South Africa.[20] It is understood that South Africa will contend that the matter is not within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly as it is essentially one of domestic jurisdiction. With this contention the Government of India do not agree. In their view the treatment of Indians in South Africa is fundamentally a moral and human issue which, in view of the "Purposes" and "Principles" so clearly stated in the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly cannot disregard.

A further important matter will be that of the new International Trusteeship. The Indian delegation will stress the point that sovereignty everywhere vests in the people of a country. If for any reason immediate independence is not feasible, then India would not object to the territory being placed under United Nations trusteeship for a limited period.

The attitude of our delegation will be that all Asians and the people of dependent countries stand together for freedom and for emancipation from foreign control, as this is the only way for bringing about world peace and progress.

19. She led the Indian delegation to the U.N. General Assembly during 1946-51.
20. The question of the discriminatory treatment of Indians in South Africa was taken by India to the United Nations in June 1946.

Another item of importance concerns the Union of South Africa's wish to absorb the mandated territory of South-West Africa. This proposition India's delegation will oppose on a point of principle; the Government of India consider that annexation of mandated territory would be fundamentally opposed to the conception of Mandates and Trusteeship and that sovereignty resides ultimately in the people of a territory, whose wishes and interests are paramount. The correct course, in their view, would be for South-West Africa to be placed first under the trusteeship of the Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations and then to consider its future.

Two items on the agenda have to do with the privilege of veto enjoyed by the five Great Powers in the Security Council—or, as those countries prefer to term it, the 'rule of Great Power unanimity'. The attitude of the delegation towards this controversial issue will be that, although on principle India cannot like such an essentially undemocratic provision in the Charter, she attaches the greatest importance to the continuance of Great Power unanimity and cooperation within the framework of the United Nations and would do nothing to prejudice that position.

Progress in the Conference now in session in Paris[21] to decide terms of peace with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland has been regrettably but perhaps understandably slow. India's delegation has, wherever possible, followed an independent line of fair compromise, and has supported those proposals which seemed to offer the solution most generally equitable. The delegation has throughout borne clearly in mind the humanitarian aspect of each problem confronting the conference.

For two reasons India has refrained from presenting a formal claim for reparations from Italy.[22] First, because she has no wish to reduce the amount of reparations available for distribution to countries whose claims may be entitled to priority of consideration, and second, because she preferred not to add to that heavy burden which Italy must carry up the steep hill towards economic recovery. The delegation has, however, reserved the right to utilize Italian assets in India towards liquidating Indian nationals' claims to compensation for damage arising out of the war, and for meeting in part certain other claims.

21. The Paris Peace Conference met from 29 July to 15 October 1946. There were delegations from 21 countries. The Indian delegation to the conference was led by Samuel Runganadhan.

22. India's contribution to the Allied war effort in North Africa and Italy imposed a heavy economic and financial burden on India. The budgetary cost alone to India of the war against Italy was about £ 100,000,000. The number of man-years represented by the fighting against Italy was three-quarter million and those spent in civilian effort, including supply of labour, over three million. This was disclosed by the Indian delegate to the Paris Peace Conference at the Italian Economic Committee meeting in Paris on 11 September 1946.

India's concern in the future of the ex-Italian colonies in Africa has been made fully apparent.[23] Discussion on this issue ended yesterday and a position in which India will be consulted before any final decision is taken is assured.

As regards the position of Indians in East Africa the Immigration Bills introduced in the legislatures of three of the East African colonies[24] had caused a great deal of apprehension, both in India and among Indians in those colonies. The delegation headed by Raja Sir Maharaj Singh contacted the people there—Indians, Africans, Europeans and others—and the Government of India was awaiting its report.

Unfortunately there has been for some time past a kind of impasse with regard to our relations with Ceylon.[25] Many things have happened there in recent months, or years for the matter of that, which have agitated Indian opinion a great deal.

But we have tried our utmost, and we propose to continue trying, to approach the people of Ceylon and the Ceylon Government in a friendly manner because it is inevitable that Ceylon and India must pull together in future and we do not want a trace of bad blood between us.

I shall make every effort to go to Ceylon but I cannot yet say definitely when I will be able to go.

We welcome the proposed formation of a new Government in Burma under Maj-Gen. Aung San. We welcome it from many points of view: first of all, in the hope that this will lead rapidly to the freedom and independence of Burma, and secondly, we not only hope but expect that the relations between our Government and the new Burmese Government will be friendly and cordial.

We also express gratitude to the new Governor of Burma[26] for the withdrawal of certain trials[27] that were proceeding against Indians there.

23. India's right to be consulted in the final disposal of former Italian colonies in North Africa was assured by a new declaration issued by the "Big Four" Foreign Ministers at Paris on 23 September 1946. Molotov said that the "Dominions—South Africa, Australia and New Zealand—and India," who contributed substantial forces in the liberation of former Italian African colonies, would be entitled to have their views heard by the "Big Four" before they made their decision on the colonies.
24. In April 1946 the Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda Governments simultaneously published an immigration bill to be enacted as a permanent measure to tighten up the immigration restrictions.
25. The impasse was with regard to the question of Indian immigrants in Sri Lanka, the Indian demand for equal franchise with the rest of the population and citizenship rights and the eviction of Indian labourers from Knavesmire estate.
26. Major General Hubert Rance.
27. Manilal Doshi of the Azad Hind Government and five other Indians connected with the Netaji Fund Committee were being prosecuted on charges of alleged extortions during Japanese occupation. The cases were withdrawn on 14 September as a result of a personal approach by Nehru to the Governor of Burma.

Conditions in Malaya are none too good.[28] The mission sent by the Government and the Congress mission had returned after doing very good work.[29] The Government of India has so far sent Rs. 10 lakhs to give relief to indigent Indians there.

The External Affairs Department had provided for 21,000 Haj pilgrims from India but 4,000 or 5,000 more people were waiting to go. Since I took charge, additional efforts were made to secure shipping and it is hoped that one more ship, which can accommodate 1,200 or 1,500 pilgrims, may be available. Some have also been sent by air. My Department has appealed to the American authorities to supply shipping if they can and they have been good enough to say that they will do their utmost but I do not know whether they will succeed.

Obviously in the future we have to do two things: first to have a much larger number of diplomatic representatives and secondly to deal with them directly. Naturally, often enough we shall inform His Majesty's Government of what we have done, but the point is that direction and advice will go from here and not from the Foreign Office in London.

We hope fairly soon to have regular diplomatic representatives in some countries, probably beginning with the U.S.A. and China. We have at present Agents General in Nanking and Washington and so we have contacts which we can develop. We can give them a higher status and have direct relations with these Governments.

We should like the same type of relations with Russia, but for the moment we have none and we have to explore, investigate and then establish them after consultation with the Soviet Government. We certainly want to develop those relations from every point of view because, apart from Russia's intrinsic importance in world affairs today, the Soviet Union is our neighbour, and it is always desirable to have neighbourly relations with neighbours.

Question: What will be the status of our representatives in Nanking and Washington?

Jawaharlal Nehru: The designation has not been finally settled but it might very well be Ambassador.

28. There was much uneasiness in the Indian community in Malaya on account of indiscriminate arrests by the British Military Administration on charges of collaboration with the Japanese.
29. Two medical missions were sent to Malaya in March 1946, by the Government of India and the Congress respectively, to provide emergency relief to destitute Indians, especially those working on rubber plantations.

The Government of India will informally contact the various countries of Europe, including of course France, and find out exactly what kind of representatives they would like to exchange with us. This will be followed by a formal approach. This applies also to Russia and the various countries of Asia.

The Government of India intend to send a goodwill mission to the Middle Eastern countries—Egypt, Iran, Iraq, etc.—not with a view to conveying any special political message but a message of goodwill and friendliness and our desire to have closer relations, diplomatic, cultural, etc. We hope we shall be able to get Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to lead it. The personnel of the mission to Europe have not yet been chosen but it is hoped that one of the persons who will help us in this matter would be Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon, President of the India League, London. I do not know whether Mr. Menon will go to Russia. That depends upon arrangements to be made later.

Q: Do the Government of India intend to send other Indian women to international conferences as they are sending Mrs. Pandit to the U.N.O. General Assembly?

JN: We will be very glad to send Indian women not only to international conferences but to appoint them permanently as Ministers and Ambassadors.

As regards the High Commissioner's office in London it hardly deals with political matters. It is now mainly concerned with pay, pensions and some other odd jobs, but obviously in the changed circumstances this office, by whatever name it is called, is likely to be much more important than it has been in the past.

Q: Do you foresee any contingency in which India's policy will be directly opposed to that of Great Britain in international conferences?

JN: As for our foreign policy, it is not necessary that India should toe the line of Great Britain in international conferences. Even in the past to some extent India has voted against a British proposal.[30] That has happened and it is quite conceivable that many such occasions may arise. Naturally, when

30. On 17 September 1946 India opposed Britain in the Paris Peace Conference for the first time. She joined eight other countries in the Balkans Economic Committee in voting against a British request for special provisions to be included in the Rumanian Draft Treaty covering compensation for shipping losses, including restitution of ships by Rumania to the United Nations. The Indian delegate said that the position of shipowners was adequately covered by the general restitution provisions of Article 24 of the Rumanian Treaty. The British proposals were defeated by 9 votes to 4.

India goes to any international conference or elsewhere she goes there not to quarrel with people but to get things done as far as possible in her own way. It is not always easy or possible to have one's way in these international conferences and, as you see, there are all manner of groupings and pulls in different directions and an issue which seems quite simple is not so simple because the background is very difficult, but occasions may arise when India may be opposed to the foreign policy of any country, including England.

If the new Government wanted to change the personnel of the delegation to the Peace Conference it could certainly have done so, but things being what they are at the Conference, it did not think it worthwhile in the last stage to make any changes. But whoever the delegates or representatives are and whatever their previous backgrounds may be, obviously they have to carry out instructions sent from here. May be in some matters they have no instructions because amendments come up suddenly and in large numbers, and it is not easy to keep pace with them. Then they have to exercise their discretion within the larger instructions sent to them.

The term of office of those who represent India in various countries has expired or is on the point of expiring and the question of fresh appointments is before the Government.

Q: Will the status of diplomatic representatives be reciprocal?

JN: Yes. If we send an Ambassador to Washington or Nanking, they may also send an Ambassador to New Delhi. The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs has informally indicated to the Government of India that the Australian Government will be happy to raise the status of the Australian High Commissioner here to that of Minister. Naturally it means that our representative in Australia will also become a Minister.

Q: Will we function at international conferences as one bloc with the Commonwealth countries?

JN: I should say that we are not going to function just as a bloc in the sense that we must follow whichever way the bloc goes. We shall confer with them. We shall try to get them round to our viewpoint. When we do not succeed, we shall differ and go our way.

In the past the Indian delegates functioned very much like a kind of camp-follower of the British delegation. About 15 or 20 years ago they were practically appointed by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Government of India or *vice versa*. That practice has been gradually fading off, although it still exists. I believe it is growing more common at these conferences for the Indian delegates to confer occasionally with representa-

tives from Asian countries because they feel that Asia has certain interests which they should protect all together. Normally speaking, Asia's representation on international conferences, bodies and commissions is very poor compared to Europe's. Whenever such a matter arises which is an Asian question, they all hold together.

It is a very well-known fact that we are hundred per cent in sympathy with the Indonesian Republic. We want them to win through and establish their freedom in Indonesia and we should like to help and support them in every way in their task. We have not recognised the Indonesian Republic in the formal sense that nations recognize other nations, but in practice we recognize it.

It is conceivable that our views in regard to this matter or in regard to Iran are not exactly the same as the British Government's.[31] Our interests may not be the same, i.e., we have no interest in policing other countries or interfering in other countries' affairs. The British Empire, being a very spread-out organism, obviously has all manner of interests with which we may not be concerned. In fact we might be apprehensive of being dragged into other people's quarrels. We do not want that to happen. All these matters are in a transitional stage. What we are aiming at is quite clear; what we can or we may do tomorrow is not quite so clear.

> Q: To what extent will your Department be in a position to work towards the withdrawal of British troops from the countries to which the British had sent them?

JN: We are entirely opposed to policing other countries, and more especially opposed to the use of any Indian resources, men or money, in opposition to the national movement in any other country. We should like to have all our Indian troops back in India wherever they may be. We have been assured that this process is going on. It seems to us that it has taken longer than it need have done, but the principle is admitted that they must come back. For instance, from Indonesia many have come back. A fair number still remains there but we are told that all of them will be back by the end of November. Apart from the question of shipping, whenever the question of troops comes in one has to deal with complicated and rather static organisms like war offices.

The military authorities in Java did not give proper facilities for the transport of Indonesian rice allocated to India. We have taken up a very strong line in regard to this matter.

31. Indian public opinion was strongly against the employment of Indian troops by Britain in Indonesia and Iran for suppressing nationalism and preserving colonial interests.

The kernel of our policy is the ending of colonialism all over Asia or for that matter in Africa or elsewhere, and racial equality, or rather I should say, equality of opportunity for all races, no legal bar, etc., and the ending of domination or exploitation of one nation by another.

Q: Will our representative in London deal with India's relations with England directly?

JN: Ultimately our representative in London, whether he is called Ambassador or by any other designation, will deal with India's relations with England directly. The India Office is bound to be liquidated anyhow. Exactly when it will be liquidated I cannot say.

India will follow a very friendly policy towards Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. Nepal is an independent country so far as we are concerned. If in future Nepal chooses to have some kind of closer union with India, we shall welcome it.

Q: Will the appointment of a Minister or Ambassador to China or the U.S.A. take place in the near future?

JN: I should say it might well take place within the next two or three months or sooner.

I believe that the North-West Frontier Province Ministry did not know anything about the recent bombing operations till about the end of August.[32] When I took charge on September 2, in effect largely the operations had more or less concluded. For the first three or four days, till September 6 or so, I did not hear anything about them. When I heard of this bombing I was terribly worried because it was an urgent and vital matter, but as that ended we got some leisure to think about it and we are thinking about it and I hope—may be early next month—to pay a short visit to these tribal areas myself to meet the people chiefly concerned, i.e., the Governor, the tribal people and the Frontier Province Government and then come back here and in consultation with others to lay down some general lines of policy which could be discussed by the Cabinet.

We shall seek the good offices of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and in fact I hope to have him with me.

32. About a dozen villages in southern Waziristan were bombed during August and early September as punitive action against the Shabi Khel tribe, a division of the Mahsuds, who had kidnapped the Political Agent and his party in June to press their demand for a one-sixth share of the monetary and other benefits accruing to the Mahsuds through the Government of India.

The positive policy that we have got to pursue in the tribal areas will also depend on certain external factors like Afghanistan, because naturally anything done in the Frontier affects Afghanistan. The matter is very complicated. On the one hand, the people of the Frontier, for various reasons, economic or other, sometimes indulge in raids, kidnapping and killing people and this kind of thing cannot be tolerated. On the other hand our approach to the question should be as friendly as possible but also as firm as possible. The fundamental point is that we cannot possibly go on just in the way we have been going on. Behind all this probably is the economic background. If mineral resources are available in the tribal areas—I do not yet know whether they exist there—we may develop them. We may develop hospitals, schools and the rest. I think that the spending of a large amount of money as was done in the past as some kind of bribe or hush money is not a good way of producing a right psychology in a people. That money, I would still like to go to these Frontier areas, as without it, there might be a crisis, but I would like it to go in for constructive efforts which will raise their standards, give them new employment, and other amenities.

As regards the Advisory Council suggested for Baluchistan preliminary to the introduction of a fuller democratic system of administration, I would like to say that I do not know Baluchistan sufficiently but the three organisations I have heard and therefore suggest are the *Anjuman-i-Watan*, the Muslim League and the *Jamiat-ul-Ulema*. This course is suggested in view of the fact that it would have taken six or eight months to prepare electoral rolls etc. Constitutionally it will be an advisory body, but in practice we hope it will be much more. We cannot suddenly change the constitution.

As for the proposed Indian delegation to the U.N.O., originally the Government had invited Syed Raza Ali and Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru. Neither of them was able to accept. Later, Mr. Neogy was invited and he accepted, but in the past few days Mr. Neogy informed me that he would be unable to go owing to more or less domestic reasons. We have to send a maximum of five delegates and a fairly large number of officers, some of whom may be alternate delegates. So in effect we have to find possibly one more person as a delegate. We have got two or three persons in view.

As regards the foreign possessions in India, I may draw your attention to the declaration by the Governor of French India that they will abide by the decision of the inhabitants of French India about their future.

There is no difficulty about French India so far as I can see. There is at present a difficulty about Portuguese India, which, I regret to say, is in a deplorable condition at the present moment and has been so for some time past. Obviously this state of affairs cannot continue long in Goa. It is bad for Goa and bad for the people round Goa, but for the moment I am not aware of any Governmental action about to be taken, because obviously

although it is a small bit of India, it raises international issues. If an international issue comes in our way we will have to deal with it, but for the moment we have so many big problems to deal with that an issue which might resolve by itself need not be raised by us as Government.

14. To Maharaj Singh[1]

New Delhi
27th September 1946

My dear Maharaj Singh,

Thank you for forwarding to me the letter from a number of African leaders in Kenya.[2] I have read this letter with pleasure.

I should like representatives of the African peoples to attend the Inter-Asian Relations Conference which we propose to hold next spring. This Conference is really limited to Asia, but I suppose some Africans could come as observers and I am informing the Secretary of the Indian Council for World Affairs about this matter.

I am sending a letter[3] addressed to the signatories of the African associations. Could you kindly send it to them?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 44/47-O.S.I, p. 5/corr., National Archives of India.
2. Maharaj Singh, in his forwarding letter of 26 September 1946, had said that the signatories represented advanced African political opinion in Kenya and that their action was purely voluntary.
3. See *ante*, section 10 (I), item 9.

15. A Gesture to Africa[1]

Raja Sir Maharaj Singh has brought to me from Kenya a letter from a number of leaders of African associations. This letter is very interesting and I propose to give publicity to it in the press. In the course of this letter they have suggested that—

1. scholarships be created for African students in the universities of India as soon as it is practically possible.
2. that special facilities be made available for African students for technical, commercial and agricultural studies in India at the earliest convenient time.

Africans are very backward in education and I think it would be a fine gesture on our part to give them some scholarships. This will indicate to Africa and to the world how much interested we are in the advance and progress of backward peoples. I hope you will consider this matter. Even a small gesture will be welcome.

I might add that Raja Maharaj Singh and his colleagues in the African Mission strongly support this proposal.

1. Note to Shafaat Ahmad Khan, Member for Education, 27 September 1946. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 44/47-O.S.I, p. 1/notes, National Archives of India. Extracts.

16. Telegram to Aung San[1]

On behalf of my colleagues in the Government of India and myself I send you greeting and good wishes on the formation of your Government[2] which, we hope, will lead soon to the full independence of Burma.[3] We look forward to close and friendly cooperation between Burma and India.

1. Printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 29 September 1946.
2. On 26 September 1946, Hubert Rance announced the reorganized Executive Council as an Interim Government with Aung San as the Deputy Chairman and member in charge of Defence and External Affairs.
3. Burma became independent on 4 January 1948.

17. Sanctions against South Africa[1]

I understand that the Commerce Department is dealing with the report that jute bags of Indian origin have reached South Africa via the U.S.A.[2] I feel this matter must be urgently enquired into and every step taken to prevent its happening again. If the services of the External Affairs Department are required in order to address the U.S.A. Government we shall gladly take the necessary steps. Could you kindly let me know what steps you are taking in the matter?

1. Note to C.H. Bhabha, Member for Commerce, 30 September 1946. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 19-3/46-O S.I,p. 3/notes, National Archives of India.
2. *The Hindustan Times* of 28 September 1946 reported that an American ship was carrying 350 bales of Indian jute to Durban.

18. The Knavesmire Cases[1]

The report that the Ceylon Government is appealing for enhancement of sentences in the Knavesmire cases indicates that it wants to be vindictive.[2] This is a bad omen for us as well as for them. I think that we should address them on this subject, quite apart from the general merits of the case, and tell them that we regret to find that they are taking up such an attitude which can only have unfortunate repercussions on Indian opinion. Could you kindly draft some kind of a letter or telegram to this effect?[3]

1. Note to Secretary, Department of Commonwealth Relations, 30 September 1946. Department of Commonwealth Relations File No. 38-5/46-O.S.II, p. 53/n., National Archives of India.
2. *The Times of Ceylon* of 15 September 1946 reported that the Land Commissioner wanted enhancement of sentences passed on Indian labourers who refused to quit the rooms occupied by them at the Knavesmire estate.
3. The Sri Lanka Government clarified that no such step was contemplated and that they favoured an amicable settlement.

19. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
2 October 1946

My dear Krishna,

I received your letter of the 23rd from Karachi, your two cablegrams from London dated September 30th and October Ist and then a sheaf of letters from you from London dated 26th and 27th September. I am very glad of the success you have had during your visit to Paris. Although you have not succeeded in getting any foodstuffs from Russia you have laid a good foundation for our future relations with the Soviet.[2] I hope you will carry on with this work and go to Moscow as suggested.

About the Czech Magyar matter and Trieste,[3] I have taken some action which I hope will bear fruit so far as the attitude of our delegation is concerned. Your two cablegrams were personal ones for me, but I decided ultimately to show them to my office people. Some of them did not appreciate two or three of your references. This was natural enough in the circumstances. All of them felt that such messages should come in cypher through the London High Commissioner. They are so used to cypher messages that anything *en clair* rather shocks them as unveiling the mysteries of Foreign Offices. I think you might well use the High Commissioner's office for this purpose in future. Any special message which you wish to send me direct can, of course, be so sent. Such messages also inevitably reach other quarters because they are open.

Your reference to the forthcoming Trade Conference is not quite clear. Of course we realise its importance,[4] but for this preparatory stage we have decided to send Departmental representatives who have been dealing with

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. On 28 September 1946, Krishna Menon met Molotov in Paris and conveyed to him India's request for foodgrains. They also discussed the need to establish social, cultural and diplomatic relations, the forthcoming Asian Relations Conference, India's stand on the treatment of Indians in South Africa and the possibility of sending Soviet military experts for the Indian military schools.
3. In his telegram of 28 September 1946, Krishna Menon said the Indian delegation's abstention from voting on the Czech and Magyar issues and support of the Commonwealth amendments on the Trieste issue were "not satisfactory and inconsistent with our national position, aspiration and dignity." He also conveyed to Nehru the Czech Government's request for India's support.
4. Krishna Menon had emphasised the importance of sending a high level delegation to the forthcoming Trade Conference to be held under the auspices of the United Nations.

this matter.[5] It is difficult to change the delegation now. We have now asked Vellodi to be an observer at the Commonwealth Preliminary Conference. My cousin, R.K. Nehru, will lead the delegation to the Trade Conference.

Vijayalakshmi is due to reach London on or about the 16th October and will probably stay two days there.

The Jinnah business is continuing here and necessarily produces some uncertainty in the public mind as well as interferes with our work greatly. It is clear that the Viceroy, backed by the Secretary of State, is doing his utmost to bring the Muslim League in. Meanwhile stabbings and the like continue in various places.

You can always send letters to me through the diplomatic bag from the London High Commissioner's office.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

5. The Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Economic and Social Council met in London on 15 October 1946 to prepare a draft charter for an international trade organisation. The Indian delegation was led by R.K. Nehru, Joint Secretary, Commerce Department.

20. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
3 October 1946

My dear Krishna,

There has been some kind of a hold-up at this end about the proposal for you to act as my Personal Representative in some countries of Europe. I am not quite clear in my mind how to deal with this matter, but I shall decide soon. Meanwhile you have actually been functioning as such and we shall send you authority to go to Russia in continuation of your dealings with Molotov. Also we have appointed you as an alternate delegate for the U.N.O. General Assembly. I hope you will be able to go there and develop contacts with the various representatives of different countries. You can come back from New York in time for your visit to Russia at the end of November. This will really take up all your time for the next two months or more.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

21. Telegram to L.C. Jain[1]

2. Your *enclair* telegram No. 43 of September 30th.[2] It is not clear to me in what capacity you sent a message to British Prime Minister, whether on your own behalf or mine or that of Govt. of India. In any case while I appreciate your anxiety to take advantage of opportunity offered by personal contact with Members of British Parliament, I must remind you that you are representative in Japan of Govt. of India, and any communications to other Governments or persons should be made solely through Govt. of India.

3. You are requested not to send telegrams on matters related to policy except in cypher or code.

1. New Delhi, 6 October 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 301-F.E.A./46, p. 25, National Archives of India.
   L.C. Jain (b. 1901); Professor of Economics, Punjab University, 1931-45; Indian Government Adviser to Allied Control Commission in Japan, 1946; Political Representative of India in Japan, 1946-47.
2. Jain had written about his meeting with the leader of the British parliamentary delegation. Through him he had sent a personal message of goodwill and greetings to Attlee.

22. To W.L. Clayton[1]

New Delhi
7th October 1946

My dear Mr. Clayton,
I had the pleasure of meeting General George A. Brownell[2] a few days ago and he brought to me your letter of September 6th. He told me of the purpose of his visit to India as a representative of President Truman to work out mutually satisfactory arrangements for bilateral air transport between our

1. File No. 382-PS/46, p. 45 (this file is kept with the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations File No. 597-F.E.A./47), National Archives of India.
2. George Abbott Brownell (b. 1898); served in the U.S. Army and Air Force; Personal Representative of the President to India and the Middle East, 1946 and Mexico, 1948; Consultant to the State Department, 1946-57.

two countries. I hope to meet him again soon and to discuss this matter further with him. I am very much interested in the development of air transport and General Brownell has offered to enlighten me about future lines of development.

I am very grateful to you and to the Department of State for your good wishes. My colleagues in the Interim Government of India and I value the cooperation and goodwill of the United States Government very greatly. We appreciated therefore Mr. Acheson's[3] public declaration of good wishes for our Government[4] and your present letter has added to our satisfaction and gratitude.

With all good wishes to you,

I am,

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Dean Acheson (1893-1971); U.S. lawyer and politician; Under Secretary, 1945-47 and Secretary of State, 1949-53 in the Truman administration; author of *Present at the Creation*.
4. On 27 August 1946, Dean Acheson, acting Secretary of State, issued a statement praising the British Government and the Congress for their statesmanship and conveyed the best wishes of the United States in their efforts to effect a peaceful transition to complete freedom. He regretted the Muslim League's noncooperation.

23. Telegram to Aung San[1]

New Delhi
8 October 1946

Our Government is anxious to withdraw Indian troops from Burma and elsewhere outside India.[2] We suggest consultation with you and G.O.C. in Burma, so that whatever steps might be taken should not upset conditions in Burma, and be embarrassing to your Government. Our past policy has been one of gradual withdrawal, reducing present number of troops in Burma to less than half by April next. Should be grateful to have your Government's views on this subject. Would prefer your coming here with your G.O.C. for consultation and decision on these matters.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 8, p. 682.
2. Indian troops were in the West Asia, Burma, Malaya and Hong Kong. In Burma the Indian troops included four Indian brigades with divisional [illegible] pendent Indian battalions.

Your visit here would also be helpful in considering other matters between Burma and India and in promoting friendship and cooperation between our two Governments which we value closely. Personally, it will give me great pleasure to meet you again and discuss many matters of common interest, including the proposed Asian Conference.

24. Greetings to China[1]

It gives me much pleasure to convey to you and, through you, to your Government the greetings of the Government and people of India on the occasion of the anniversary of the founding of the Republic of China.

India of today greatly values the ancient ties between our countries and desires to strengthen them, and I take this opportunity to express the hope that we shall march forward together in closest friendship to lasting peace, prosperity and happiness.

1. New Delhi, 9 October 1946. *National Herald*, 10 October 1946. This was sent to S.H. Sih, Secretary-in-Charge of the office of the Commissioner of China to India, on the occasion of the anniversary of the founding of the Republic of China on 10 October.

25. Supplies to Afghanistan[1]

I have previously addressed H.M. Commerce on this subject and pointed out to him that there are important political considerations, apart from other reasons, which make it very desirable that we should help Afghanistan at the present moment with such supplies of cloth, sugar and some other commodities as we can spare.[2] Conditions in Afghanistan are very bad,

1. Note to C.H. Bhabha and C. Rajagopalachari, Members for Commerce and Industry respectively, 9 October 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 11(34)-IA/47, p. 31/notes, National Archives of India.
2. The Afghan government had said that without Indian support in supplies of essential commodities there would be chaos as the Soviet Union had stopped supplies to the northern half of Afghanistan. Afghan economic dependence on India would not result in political dependence as they feared it would if they took help from the Soviet Union.

especially in the northern provinces, and any help from us would go a long way to smooth our relations with Afghanistan and further friendly contacts. Unfortunately, there are some people who have been carrying on insidious propaganda to the effect that the Interim Government in India does not care for Afghanistan and is not prepared to help it as previous Governments here did. This, of course, is completely false. It is not for me to judge what we can spare ultimately, but I should like to emphasise the importance, from the political angle, of sending supplies to Afghanistan.

I understand that any decision today cannot really be given effect to for four or five months, because of the inability of the Afghanistan Government to make suitable arrangements for transport. So, in effect, we should think in terms of what we can supply to them within the next four or five months. If we tell them this now it will have good effect and they can tell their people that supplies will be coming later.

A proposal was made by the Afghanistan Government to exchange their cotton with yarn or cloth. I am told, how far this is true I do not know, that their cotton is good, of the long staple variety.

26. Telegram to V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

Your telegram No. 5895 of October 5th. Appreciate Molotov's message.[2] Awaiting official letter. Shall then take further steps and send you instructions for your visit to Moscow.

I have considered your suggestion at the end of your telegram. I feel that it would be preferable for you to establish unofficial contacts first in New York with the representatives of other countries. Later visit them by arrangement or invitation. You will have ample opportunity in New York for meeting foreign representatives. Therefore feel it is preferable for you not visit Paris before you go to New York.

1. External Affairs Department to Pethick-Lawrence, 10 October 1946. File No. L/P & J/10/83A, I.O.L.R., London.
2. In his message to Nehru, Molotov expressed "readiness to develop friendly relations with India and to exchange diplomatic and other representatives." As for the food aid, he said that, owing to drought in a number of important agricultural districts of the U.S.S.R., the Soviet Government were unable to send any cereals that year.

27. Diplomatic Relations with Russia[1]

I agree.[2] When Mr. Krishna Menon goes to Moscow he should be provided with instructions and a brief. His immediate business will be to discuss preliminaries in regard to the exchange of diplomatic representatives. Other matters should be considered later when the exchange has been effected. They may be informally discussed previously. In view of M. Molotov's friendly letter to me and his invitation to Mr. Krishna Menon, it is desirable that we follow this up in the manner indicated.

I have already mentioned this matter to my colleagues in the Cabinet. I shall discuss it further with them. I shall also mention it to H.E.

1. Note to K.P.S. Menon, 10 October 1946. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 20(4)-EUR/47, pp. 19-20/notes, National Archives of India.
2. K.P.S. Menon, in his note of 10 October 1946, had suggested that Molotov's invitation to Krishna Menon to visit Moscow should be accepted and an official request for the exchange of diplomatic missions might be made through him.

28. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
11 October 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have received your letter No. 493 of the 11th October regarding the telegram I sent on the 8th October to Major-General Aung San.[2]

2. On Sunday last the Defence Member and the Commander-in-Chief came to see me to discuss specially the question of Indian troops abroad. They were good enough to give me facts and particulars in regard to them and to point out the implications and the consequences of withdrawal. The Commander-in-Chief suggested that it would be desirable to consult

1. *The Transfer of Power, 1942-7*, Vol. 8, pp. 707-708.
2. Wavell wrote to Nehru that this telegram should not have been sent without consulting him and should have been addressed to the Governor of Burma who was constitutionally responsible, the Executive Council in Burma still being a purely advisory body.

Major-General Aung San and that, if he could come to Delhi with the G.O.C. in Burma, such discussions would be facilitated. The Defence Member agreed with this suggestion. Thereupon I drafted a telegram and sent it to the War Department. I understand that the Defence Member consulted the Commander-in-Chief about it and then returned it to me with one or two minor corrections. The telegram was then sent.

3. I would have gladly shown you the telegram before it was sent. But as the original suggestion came from the Commander-in-Chief, who I take it is most concerned with the matter, and as it was merely an invitation to a discussion, I did not think that any decision of a major policy was involved.

4. You know what our declared policy has been in regard to Indian troops abroad. The day after I took charge I wrote to the War Department on the subject and informed them that this matter would be considered by the Cabinet at an early date and suggested that they might prepare a note on this subject. I waited for the Defence Member. On his arrival he informed me that he had taken up the matter with the Commander-in-Chief and would bring it up before the Cabinet later. I did not wish to hurry him or the Commander-in-Chief and so this matter has been kept pending for the last three weeks.

5. It was in this connection that the Defence Member and the Commander-in-Chief came to see me on Sunday last. They felt that before the matter was considered fully by the Cabinet the reaction of the new Government in Burma should be obtained and the best way of doing this was to consult Major-General Aung San.

6. As this question has now come up for consideration in one of its aspects, it is desirable that it should be put up before the Cabinet at an early date and all its implications considered and a decision taken. This would involve not only the withdrawal of Indian troops from Burma but from other countries also. At the next session of the Legislative Assembly this question is certain to be raised by many members and the policy of the Government must be clearly defined before that meeting.

7. Some days ago I received a letter from His Highness the Aga Khan from Montreux, Switzerland. A copy of this letter was sent to you for your information as I thought it would interest you. In this letter you will no doubt have read the reactions of a very conservative Indian politician to the retention of Indian troops abroad. That, I might say, is a universal sentiment in India and if we are to represent the people of India and be responsible to them for our actions we must respect and give effect to that decision.

8. I am not unaware of our relations with H.M.G. But I do not understand how those relations come in the way of our conferring with the present Government of Burma on a common matter of interest to both. We shall naturally keep H.M.G. informed of these consultations. Whatever the constitutional position of Burma may be today, a reference to the most important member of that Government can in no way be unconstitutional or improper. I meant no discourtesy to the Governor of Burma and I would have gladly sent the telegram to him or through him. But as it was suggested to me that the invitation might be sent to Major-General Aung San directly, I accepted this suggestion.

9. You will no doubt appreciate that any questions between India and Burma, or any other country, can be more easily dealt with if the first approach is informal and often on a personal basis. Official approaches are stiff and lead to commitments at too early a stage. They involve also often enough red tape and delay.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

29. On the American Proposals for Direct Air Services[1]

As you are aware, General Brownell has come from the United States accompanied by a special staff on a mission to arrive at an agreement with the Government of India in regard to American through air services. He will deal with your Department and discuss all the points concerned with your experts. I should like to point out, however, that this matter is not only a departmental matter but one which has a political aspect also and involves some questions of high policy. General Brownell came with a special letter from President Truman to the Viceroy. He also brought a letter for me from the Acting Secretary of the State Department, Washington.[2] It is thus obvious that this matter is one in which the American Government and

1. Note to Asaf Ali, Member for Communications, 11 October 1946. File No. 382-PS/46, pp. 42-43 (this file is kept with the Ministry of E.A. & C.R. File No. 597-F.E.A./47), National Archives of India.
2. On 6 September 1946, W.L. Clayton had proposed to work out a mutually satisfactory bilateral air transport agreement between the two countries.

more specially the State Department are taking the greatest interest. Any decision that we may arrive at will have to be at the highest level and it may be that the Cabinet will have to consider it. The Cabinet would naturally only consider matters of principle and policy and not the details. At what stage the Cabinet is to consider it, it is for you to determine. Thus it may be desirable for those questions of policy to be considered by the Cabinet at an early stage so as to give the necessary directions for future negotiations. Or, alternatively, negotiations may take place to explore all the avenues and before coming to final decisions certain matters might be referred to the Cabinet for their directions. It is obviously undesirable for the experts to commit themselves finally before the Cabinet is referred to.

2. I do not know enough about the matters at issue to be able to give any definite opinion at this stage, although I have discussed them to some extent both with General Brownell and his colleagues and with some officers of your Department and External Affairs Department who have been concerned with this matter. Obviously we have to consider national interests first and not agree to anything which may impede the growth of our national air industry and air services which we hope will grow fast in the near future. At the same time we cannot take up too narrow a line which might appear to come in the way of international development. We have to strike a balance between the two. International development to some extent will help national development also in various ways. It will result in the development of feeder lines, it will develop air consciousness in the people, and it will also probably bring a great deal of tourist traffic to India. This traffic will bring money and will also probably bring passengers for our national airways. In the immediate present and the near future there appears to be no chance of major conflict between international airways passing through India and our national airways. But later on as our airways develop there would be competition and it will be difficult to meet that competition unless we give some kind of protection to our air services. The first question that arises is whether any freedom given now to foreign air services, though not coming in our way at present, may not obstruct our progress at a later stage. Normally this can be provided for by some kind of a saving clause permitting us to change the terms of the contract after due notice, or by having a contract which is terminable at any time after due notice. In addition to this of course there should be provision for continuous mutual consultation and adjustment.

3. In considering the development of air services the question of defence is an important one, which has to be borne in mind though it does not affect the situation immediately.

4. From the political point of view it is naturally our desire to develop

friendly relations and contacts with the United States. We are likely to have dealings with them in many spheres of activity, industrial, economic and other. Capital goods will be coming from America to India and it is likely that many experts will also come. All these dealings will of course be not for humanitarian reasons but because they are to the mutual advantage of both parties concerned. India at present both politically and industrially is in a strong bargaining position. We have to take full advantage of this position but at the same time to do so in a manner so as to retain the goodwill of other countries. I suggest therefore that our approach to the American proposals should be as friendly as possible and that we shall tell them that we are prepared to go as far as we possibly can subject only to the protection of our national interests which must be paramount for our Government just as American national interests must be paramount for the United States Government. We shall try our best to adjust these two approaches to the mutual advantage of both countries. We want the development of international air services and should like to help in this process but we want also the development of our national air services which may extend to other countries before very long.

5. I suggest to you therefore that the matter should be considered by the Cabinet when you think that the time has come for it.

30. To L.C. Jain[1]

New Delhi
12/14th October 1946

Dear Dr. Jain,
I have received your cable dated 15.9.46 and your letters dated September 10th and 16th.[2] I have also read the messages you have been sending to our Department here.

I must confess that much that you have written has not appealed to me and I have not wholly appreciated your approach.

1. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 301-F.E.A./46, pp. 55-56, National Archives of India.
2. Jain had asked for an independent status in Japan as well as for more staff and suitable accommodation.

At your request[3] we agreed to appoint you as Political Representative[4] in addition to your duties as Economic Adviser. We had no intention otherwise of appointing a Political Representative at this stage. As soon as this was done you raised another question of separation of the two offices. Now in your letter you make a number of other suggestions for the expansion of your staff and even propose names for Commercial and Military Advisers and Public Relations Officer and Secretaries and a Military Aide. All this seems to me to indicate an approach to this problem which is very different from ours. We have no intention of setting up this complicated apparatus of representation and it seems rather odd to me that without finding out our intentions you even propose names for posts which do not exist.

Another thing which struck us as very strange was your sending a message through some British missionaries to the British Prime Minister. Such messages are not sent by our representatives. They deal with us and not with foreign countries directly.

All this leads us to think that there is some misconception in your mind as to the kind of work you should do there. This whole subject will be examined here and instructions will be sent to you later. Meanwhile will you please confine yourself to the specific work you are in charge of?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. On 5 September, Jain cabled that General MacArthur had suggested to him that it would be most advantageous if India had a separate liaison mission in Japan and would welcome Jain's appointment as the head of such a mission.
4. Jain was appointed Political Representative of India in Japan on 9 September 1946.

31. Message to Ho Chi Minh[1]

It would have been a great pleasure to me to meet the Head of the Vietnam Republic and to convey personally to you the greetings and good wishes of India for your people.

1. Printed in *The Hindu*, 13 October 1946. The message was conveyed by M.S. Aney, Indian representative in Ceylon, on 10 October 1946 to Ho Chi Minh at Kandy.
   Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969); led the freedom struggle in Indo-China during the Second World War and became President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945; after the Armistice Agreement in July 1954 assumed Premiership also but relinquished it in September 1955; President, 1960-69.

We welcome the freedom of all parts of Asia and we look forward to the cooperation of all the countries of Asia and their peoples in the cause of freedom and peace.

There is a proposal to hold an Inter-Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in March, 1947. We hope to have representatives from almost all the countries of Asia at this Conference. I trust that it will be possible for the Vietnam Republic also to participate in this Conference.

32. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
13 October 1946

My dear Krishna,

I think I have already written to you that I have received your bunch of letters describing in detail your interview with Molotov and your other experiences in Paris. In your cable sending me Molotov's message you mentioned that his letter was coming in the diplomatic bag. I am waiting to receive this and shall then take other steps. These other steps will mean our communicating with the British Government and telling them that we are asking you to accept Molotov's invitation to go to Moscow about the end of November.

As I have informed you, we are taking no other steps for the present about your visit to the various European countries. Apart from the question of time, we thought it better not to raise this issue immediately as the situation here was rather complicated. Your going to Paris and seeing Molotov was a very good thing and the quick response of Molotov to our approaches is going to help us greatly in the future. At the same time these sudden developments are rather upsetting for our External Affairs Department and the Viceroy. They feel rather lost and do not know where all this might lead to. You will easily understand their reactions. Those reactions were inevitable and need not ultimately influence our course of action much. But there is some advantage in taking things step by step and not altogether. The next natural step following from your visit to Molotov is your visit to Moscow. In between the U.N.O. fits in and gives you an opportunity to meet representatives of various countries. You may even fix up with them future possible visits, but it is better that nothing definite should be done without reference to us and no commitments should be made. Quite apart from the difference in outlook between the British and us, you will remember that Foreign Offices

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

are always afraid of commitments and the diplomatic way is to avoid definiteness and indulge in vague generalities. That is not the way that I approve of. Yet sudden commitments frighten those who are used to older methods. In addition to this you must remember that we have to carry our own people with us and they have to be brought up to think of the question in all its aspects by some gradual course taken step by step. Otherwise even their minds become apprehensive.

A reference in your long report about Paris to your asking Molotov about the possibility of sending military experts completely upset our Department.[2] The comment they made was that this kind of thing may commit ourselves and queer the pitch for the future ambassador whom we may send. The Russians may suggest sending a military mission to India and then we will find it hard to accept or refuse. This report of yours was evidently meant for me only. But it was such a good report that I decided to put it on the official file, well realising that some parts of it would not go down easily with our departmental officials. Your other long report discussing personalities has been kept by me and not put on the file. I have shown it, however, to K.P.S. Menon.

There is a conviction among our departmental people that the Russians are terribly hard-headed, do not commit themselves but get others to commit themselves. Probably this is true not only for the Russians but for many others who work in the diplomatic field. We are likely to do the same when we have the chance. Meanwhile I decided to proceed a little slowly and there was no need for immediate hurry.

The situation here is a changing one and the tension between us and the Viceroy has increased. The next few days are likely to see some developments in regard to the Muslim League. Jinnah has not come to an agreement with us and yet oddly enough the Muslim League is almost certain to come into the Interim Government. They feel that they cannot be left out in the wilderness any longer. Having not agreed to come in by the front door, they want to creep in by the back door. We cannot stop them from doing this because our position still is that we shall give them five seats if they want to take them. In a sense it is better for them to come in without any other commitments by us. But, of course, this probably means an attempt sometimes to noncooperate from within. I fear we shall have this trouble and the Viceroy will certainly take advantage of it. It is true that we have insisted and the Viceroy also, at our instance, has told Jinnah that there must be teamwork in the Cabinet. But the mere fact that the League is not

2. Molotov told Krishna Menon on 28 September 1946 that between two friendly countries no assistance should be barred and if India desired military experts for her military schools of the future the Soviet Government would be able to make suitable arrangements without any conditions.

coming in as a result of an agreement with us but otherwise indicates conflict later on.

The talks I have had with Jinnah and the letters[3] he has written make it clearer than ever that it is frightfully difficult to work with him in any field. Apart from major questions of policy, even in a hundred small matters he can delay and hold up things. All this is not a pleasant prospect.

I suggest to you that in future you should, as far as possible, send your reports, short or long, through official channels in cypher or by diplomatic bag. Anything very special that you wish to send to me privately may be sent otherwise. But generally speaking these should be additions to the major reports.

You will, of course, have talks with Vijayalakshmi and K.P.S. Menon. K.P.S. will tell you what has been happening here in the office and how we intend proceeding with the matter later.

I want to make it clear that I have complete faith in you and I am quite sure that whatever step you will take will be taken after full consideration and with a view not to create any difficulties. So far as I am concerned that is all right. But other people, who do not know you well, have also to be taken into consideration and hence I have suggested to you that you might bear these people also in mind. Yesterday Amrit Kaur forwarded a letter to me from some English woman in England, whom I do not know but who apparently is well-known to Gandhiji. She had written to him that she and others were a little concerned at your appointment as a Personal Representative of mine to tour about various European countries. She said that there could be no doubt about your ability and sincerity but you had not got on well with many people and sometimes irritated them. This, of course, has no particular significance. I mention it so that you may know the various influences that are at work.

In America you will be busy with the U.N.O. I should like you to cultivate the people who are going from here on the delegation. They are a mixed crowd. You will also be busy with meeting representatives both from Europe and Asia as well as America. Don't forget the Inter-Asian Relations Conference.

Then there is the *Herald* matter.[4] About this Feroze is writing to you separately. I am so full of other work that I cannot pay any attention to the *Herald* except occasionally to join in the talk. Yesterday we had a little conference with Srinivasan of *The Hindu*, Shiva Rao, Deshbandhu Gupta of Delhi and some others. Srinivasan is prepared to help us all along the line and we hope to get on well together. I am inclined to think that we must decide to come to Delhi even though this might mean stopping the Lucknow

3. See *ante*, sebtion 3 (II), items 19, 20 and 24.
4. Arrangements had to be made to publish a Delhi edition of the *National Herald*.

edition. Delhi is the right centre. How we should proceed about this matter is another thing. I hope that you and Raghunandan Saran, who I take it is also in the U.S.A., will find out what machinery etc., are available and let us know by cable. Meanwhile we are taking steps about land and housing in Delhi. We are engaging a competent press engineer (a refugee Austrian Jew).[5]

We shall be receiving almost daily messages from our U.N.O. delegation. It is always possible for you to add some semi-personal message to me, or to send this separately. K.P.S. will tell you how to proceed about this matter.

About the *Herald,* finances are of course a big thing and it is no longer good enough to think in small terms. It will not be too easy to get much money. However, we hope to raise about Rs. 500,000 in the course of the next two, three months or more.

I do not know what you have done about *The New York Herald Tribune* Forum.[6] I think you might consult Vijayalakshmi and K.P.S. Menon and others about this matter. I do not myself see any harm in your participating in it, but still instinctively I do not like the idea that you should do so at the present juncture. Both in your capacity as a delegate to the U.N.O. and your other diplomatic missions, it does not quite fit in for you to indulge in controversy on the public stage in the United States. This controversy is bound to centre round the Muslim League's attitude and Pakistan. I have advised all our delegates to avoid, so far as they can, being entangled in such an argument in the United States. They must function as India's delegates, speaking for the whole of India, and not as party delegates attacking another party. Still it will be difficult altogether to avoid references to this question especially when you are asked about them. They can be privately dealt with at any time. Publicly all of you will have to rely on your own tact and discretion. You cannot refuse to reply and you cannot enter into a long argument.

I understand that the *Herald Tribune* people have invited Begum Shah Nawaz and Ispahani on behalf of the Muslim League. For this matter the India Office and the Viceroy here have gone quite out of their way to provide facilities for these two persons to go to the United States. That, of course, is in keeping with their general attitude of support to the Muslim League.

I am going to the Frontier Province and the tribal areas on the 16th for a week. This visit of mine has given rise to a lot of consternation and every effort is being made to stop me from going. On behalf of the Muslim League and their adherents in the Frontier all manner of threats have been held out. All this has, of course, made me more decided about it. Yet the question of

5. Little is known of this person except that his name was Taussig. He worked at the *National Herald* office only for a short while.
6. *The New York Herald Tribune* sponsored a forum to discuss Indian affairs. The Congress was represented by Vijayalakshmi Pandit and Krishna Menon.

the Frontier is an extraordinarily intricate and difficult one and is partly connected with our relations with Afghanistan. It is quite possible that mischievous persons might create trouble there and even small beginnings have a tendency to grow.

So far as Afghanistan is concerned I have had very friendly talks with some of their Ministers visiting Delhi and we are giving them every assistance in the shape of cloth and other commodities.[7] I might mention to you, however, that the Government of Iraq has taken up a very objectionable attitude towards us. In fact they have gone so far as to suggest that they would not accept a Consul appointed by us. This has been done privately and unofficially by the present Prime Minister who is apparently an admirer of Jinnah. It is likely, however, that the Prime Minister will not remain in his office for long.[8] We are allowing the matter to remain there for the moment and not taking any steps. At present there are two Iraqi Consuls in India.[9]

The proposal for us to send a goodwill mission to the Middle East headed by Maulana Azad is still in the air. We referred the matter to the British Government and they are taking a mighty long time over it. They say that they are consulting the Governments concerned. It is quite likely that they will do so in a wrong manner. I think it would be worthwhile for Vijayalakshmi, K.P.S. and you to tackle the Middle East delegates on this question and send us their reactions directly. If possible you might suggest to them to communicate with their Governments so that the official reaction also be made known to us. Of course, if any kind of invitations come from the Middle East countries, they will be very welcome. I am particularly interested in Egypt and Syria, that is the Arab countries, Iran also, though the situation there is a difficult one, and perhaps it might be desirable to omit Iran from the itinerary. Iraq would have to be omitted unless there is a definite change in the outlook of the Iraqi Government.

I am showing this letter to Vijayalakshmi and asking her to show it to K.P.S. Menon. No one else need see it.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

7. The Afghan Vice-Minister Mohammed Mian Khan and the Afghan Consul General in India, Ghulam Mohammed Khan, had met Nehru in October 1946 to discuss the cloth shortage in Afghanistan.
8. Arshad-al-Umari was Prime Minister of Iraq from June to November 1946.
9. Saiyid Abdulla-i-Bakr was Consul-General at Bombay and Saiyid Munir Rashid was the Vice-Consul at Karachi.

33. Telegram to Tibetan Government[1]

New Delhi
16 October 1946

My colleagues and I am most grateful for your kind message.[2] We look forward with confidence to the continuance and strengthening of the close and cordial relations which have existed between our two countries since ancient times.

1. External Affairs Department File No. 1(39)-NEF/46, Serial No. 3, National Archives of India.
2. In its telegram of 12 October 1946 to Nehru, the Tibetan Government sent its congratulations on the formation of the Interim Government.

34. To Y.D. Gundevia[1]

Peshawar (on tour)
20th October 1946

My dear Gundevia,[2]
I am dictating this letter in Peshawar but it will be sent to you on my return to Delhi. I have been here three days now touring about in the tribal areas and expect to return to Delhi after another two or three days. I am likely to be very much pressed for time on my return and so I am taking advantage of a little leisure here to send an answer to your letter of the 5th October.

I read this letter with great interest. It gives a very good account of events in Rangoon during some critical days. It has helped me to understand somewhat the background of news. I shall not, however, discuss these various events but rather deal with the future.

Some days ago I saw a telegram from you in which you said that a report had reached you that Dr. Abdul Rauf was likely to be appointed our Representative in Rangoon. You pointed out that the appointment of a person previously connected with Burma might have certain disadvantages. I know that well enough, but it is true, as you must know now, that we are appoint-

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 2-2/47/0.S. II, pp. 16-21/corr., National Archives of India.
2. (b. 1908); joined Indian Civil Service, 1931; Secretary to Indian Representative in Burma, 1945-47; Ambassador to Switzerland, 1953-54; Deputy High Commissioner in Great Britain, 1954-57; High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, 1957-60 and 1967-69; Foreign Secretary, 1964-65; Secretary to President, 1965-67.

ing Dr. Rauf to this post. Dr. Rauf himself was not at all anxious to go back to Burma and it was only on my persuasion that he has agreed. He left Burma for good some years ago and settled down in Allahabad. He is at present one of the possibilities for a judgeship in Allahabad. For him to leave this chance and uproot himself again was not an easy matter, but he has agreed to do so and I hope that within two or at the most three weeks he will be able to go.

While there is an obvious disadvantage in sending a person to Burma who was previously associated with Burmese affairs, there are very considerable advantages in choosing Dr. Rauf. I have known him for ten years and have a very high opinion of him. Others who have known him also think likewise. Naturally he has decided views in regard to our relations with Burma. I prefer that to sending a person with a blank mind who would take many months even to know the bare facts of the situation. The point is whether Dr. Rauf's views are the right views or not. I am not so much concerned with those views coinciding with those of any particular group of Indians in Burma or not.

Naturally I would like the Indian community in Burma to support our policy. I should like our representatives to consult them and to cooperate with them, but I think it should be clearly understood that our policy in regard to Burma is not going to be decided except at the highest level in India. We want to protect the interests of Indians in Burma, to safeguard the interests and honour of India there, and to do everything in our power to help our countrymen there. But it often happens that our people abroad, or some of them, take up too narrow an attitude and think far too much of their immediate interests. In doing so they forget larger issues at stake. We have to take the longer view and cannot be diverted from it even though some of our countrymen in Burma think otherwise.

Unfortunately it so happens that Indian communities abroad are often split up into many groups which find it difficult to cooperate with one another. No one can expect an absolute unanimity of opinion in such circumstances but we are entitled to expect Indians in foreign countries to put up some kind of a joint front in regard to vital issues. Also we are entitled to expect them to fit in with the national policy in that respect.

To my thinking Dr. Rauf will be able to represent our national policy ably. He is not a party man in the usual sense of the word. He is a scholar, unused to active politics, with a deep knowledge of Burma and the present Burmese leaders. He was generally liked in Burma when he was there. He is particularly friendly with Aung San. He is just the type of man who would normally be chosen for a responsible diplomatic post. I am not sure how long he will be able to remain in Burma because he may be wanted for other work in some other place. For the moment we may think of him as staying in Burma for a year at least.

What should be our policy in Burma? We should be perfectly clear about this matter. We need not consider this in any detail but the broad lines should be laid down. Negatively that is not going to be a policy of claiming any special privileges for Indians, particularly for Indian vested interests. In the past a great deal of injury has been done to India's relations with Burma by the insistence of Indian business and other interests for privileged treatment. These interests claimed from England special protection in Burma. That was a foolish and impolitic claim even from the point of view of the narrowest self-interest, because in the last analysis England could not protect those interests, but as a matter of fact the British had no desire to do so and they exploited this opportunity for promoting ill will between India and Burma. It must be made perfectly clear that we are not going to appeal anyhow to British authority to protect any of our interests in Burma or elsewhere abroad. We can only protect them in two ways, with the goodwill of the Burmese people and their leaders, or with our own strength, or with both. We cannot have that goodwill if we claim something that gives us a privileged position over them. No Burmese party or group will agree to it, and we are not going to compel them, even if we had the strength to do so, to agree to terms which they thoroughly dislike. Any attempt to coerce them will in all likelihood not succeed and in any event it would be completely opposed to our wider policies.

It must always be remembered that Burma and Ceylon occupy a very special place in regard to India. We may adopt a tough policy in regard to other foreign countries, but we may not do so in regard to Burma and Ceylon because we do not wish to alienate them. They are not completely foreign to us, though in many ways they differ, specially Burma. Our policy must be based therefore on winning them over even though many irritating developments may take place in the present as in the case of Ceylon.

Fortunately the position in Burma is much better, so far as Indians are concerned, than in Ceylon. In Aung San, the dominating personality in Burmese politics, we have a person who is friendly towards India and who wants to develop closer contacts. Not to take advantage of this favourable position will be extreme folly.

Our policy therefore must be definitely based on doing everything in our power to make the Burmese people our friends. This is not only desirable from the long distance point of view but also from the narrower point of view of immediate Indian interests. I would be prepared to go some distance in sacrificing some immediate advantage if thereby we bring Burma and the Burmese people nearer to us.

It is clear that in the future Indians in Burma will have to choose between Burmese nationality and Indian nationality. If some choose the former, they are welcome to it, and they should get the normal privileges of Burmese nationals. If they choose to remain Indian nationals, as many no doubt will,

they should have all the privileges accorded to the nationals of a friendly country and no more. They cannot have it both ways.

Whether Indians choose to become Burmese nationals or not, they must give the fullest support to the Burmese national movement and the cause of Burmese independence.[3] They cannot make this subject to any conditions in regard to their position or treatment. Any such attempt would be a bad bargain. Indians have every right to look to India as their homeland, to take pride in India and to help, in so far as they can, the cause of India. But however much they may do so, it is their bounden duty as residents of Burma to espouse the cause of Burma and to help it to the utmost of their ability. Otherwise they will remain isolated communities of foreigners cut off from the living currents of Burmese national life and disliked by the Burmese people. I am glad that Indians in Burma joined hands in the recent strikes in Burma.[4] I do not know the merits of these strikes and I cannot pass any judgement upon them, but it was a wise and far-seeing move to fall in line with Burmese sentiment and Burmese activities at this critical juncture.

It is not for Indians to ally themselves as a group with any political party in Burma. Nevertheless it is desirable for them to be as cooperative as possible with Aung San, both because of his dominating position in Burma and his leanings towards India.[5] You have yourself pointed out in your letter how Aung San has been copying in some measure what we have done in India. That itself is a favourable sign from our point of view. His letters and messages to me have also been friendly. He is greatly interested in the Inter-Asian Relations Conference we are convening early next year. He has large views, which are unusual among Burmese leaders. His outlook is definitely advanced, politically and economically. So from every point of view we should develop close relations with him.

That again does not mean that we should not remain friendly with other Burmese leaders. But if a choice has to be made we should incline towards Aung San.

Some days ago I sent you a telegram to be communicated to Aung San. This was in regard to the retention of Indian troops in Burma and I invited Aung San and the G.O.C. in Burma to come to India to discuss the matter. I do not know if he will be able to come soon or not. Perhaps it is difficult for him to come soon. But I do hope that he will be able to accept our invi-

3. In his letter dated 5 October 1946, Gundevia had written that a "very large number" of Indians living in Burma had participated in a procession taken out by the A.F.P.F.L. on 29 September.
4. Gundevia had written that Indians had joined the police strike on 23 September, called by the Joint Services Organisation of Burma to protest against the rising cost of living.
5. Addressing a mass meeting on 29 September, Aung San had appealed to "all those who called Burma their home" to support him.

tation some time or other. The mere fact of his coming here and discussing our common problems will be a good thing. I should myself like to go to Burma for a few days to meet him and others, but I fear I cannot find the time.

What the future of Indian troops in Burma is going to be, I cannot say at present, except this that we shall try our best to withdraw them from there as elsewhere abroad, as rapidly as possible. Meanwhile we are entirely opposed to the use of Indian troops in any way which is not approved of by the present Burmese Government. If the possibility of any such use arises, you will please inform us immediately. You can make this position quite clear to Aung San whenever opportunity offers itself.

Further you can make clear to Aung San and his Government that the Government of India desire no special safeguards or privileges which may be contrary to Burmese interests for our people in Burma. We have gladly noted the statements made by prominent Burmese leaders that Indians in Burma will receive the same general treatment as the Burmese people. We do not propose to intervene unless we are convinced that injustice is being done to Indians. Even so, it will be our desire to settle the matter amicably as between the two Governments. In no event are we going to seek a privileged position harmful to Burmese interests.

To Indians in Burma we would say that we shall help them in every way to ensure that they enjoy political or commercial privileges such as they are entitled to. But we cannot support them if they demand any special privileges which come in the way of Burmese interests or development. We expect them to live and act in Burma in cooperation with the Burmese people and to advance the cause of Burmese freedom. We would not like them to behave in a manner which will widen the gulf between them and the Burmese, nor do we want to encourage the habit of asking the Government of India for the protection of special rights or safeguards in such matters as separate electorates or reserved seats for Indians. While we cannot give a final opinion unless we see the full picture of any scheme, we want to make it clear that we are opposed to these on principle and because in effect any such device will be injurious to Indian interests. Separate electorates and reservations have failed in India and it has been made clear that they do not protect a minority. They merely isolate it. The position will be much worse in Burma if we make any such demand. We will not get it. What we will get instead is just the ill will of the Burmese people.

It would be desirable for us to encourage contacts with Burma other than merely commercial contacts which can more or less look after themselves. I think it would be a good thing if we made exchanges of students and professors between Burmese and Indian universities, also some development of news services between the two countries. So far as I know there are no good correspondents of Indian newspapers in Burma. I wonder if it will be

possible for your office to prepare some kind of a periodical review of Burmese affairs which might be suitable for publication in the press in India. Naturally this would not be such an intimate thing as your letters. It would be written specially for the purpose of publication and would have to be rather objective. I shall also try to see if some Indian newspapers could send correspondents to Rangoon.

Our general policy, though one, will have to advance along two parallel lines: closer association between the Government of India and the Government of Burma, and closer association between the people of India and the people of Burma. The former is relatively easy. The latter requires thinking about and activity on many fronts.

Indians abroad seldom succeed in building up an association representing all Indians or all groups. They have an unfortunate tendency to split up in groups. We should help, privately and unofficially, and sometimes even officially, in building up an organization which might be said to represent all Indians. It should have a strong cultural side, a library, reading rooms with plenty of Indian newspapers and periodicals, a kind of club house, etc. This would be a kind of information centre of Indian activities which should be of great help to Indians. The Burmese should be welcome there also.

From all accounts you have done very good work in Burma and carried on during a difficult period with considerable success. I am very glad to learn this. I hope that when Dr. Rauf goes there, the joint efforts of you two will be of great advantage to India and Burma alike and their relations with one another.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

35. To I.R. Soekarno[1]

India has a very great deal of interest and sympathy in the Indonesian struggle for freedom.

Our mutual cooperation is essential for our future safety and progress.

Under the new Interim Government, India will have wider play and greater opportunities of cooperation with others.

I hope this will result in more intimate contacts with you and your Government.

India is anxious to translate her goodwill for Indonesia into something more effective.

1. From *The Hindu*, 25 October 1946. Full text is not available.

36. Scholarships to Students from Indonesia.[1]

We have been exchanging students from China. This was a very good step to promote closer relations with China. I suggest that we might do the same thing with Indonesia; or perhaps it would not be quite correct to say the same thing as probably there are no facilities for the education of Indian students in Indonesia at present. To begin with, therefore, all we can do is to offer scholarships to some Indonesian students to study in Indian universities. I would strongly urge upon you to take some steps in this direction and to announce that a number of Indonesian students would be given such scholarships. Later on when facilities are available in Java some of our students should go there. I understand that Dr. Sultan Shahrir, Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic, would greatly welcome some such step on our behalf. This will be in a sense an informal recognition of the Indonesian Republican Government[2] and would lead to further contacts.

2. I suggest to you, therefore, that the Education Department might make some such announcement stating further that selection of students would be left to some authority constituted in this behalf by the Indonesian Republican Government.

1. Note to Shafaat Ahmed Khan, 25 October 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 18-F.E.A./46. p. 1, National Archives of India.
2. The Republican Government was formed in Indonesia on 17 August 1945.

37. Immigration Restrictions in East Africa[1]

The Maharaj Singh delegation's report is exhaustive and good.[2] It should certainly be given publicity in India. The Central Assembly would be entitled to see it. I do not understand why it should be treated as a confidential

1. Note to A.V. Pai, 26 October 1946. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 24-18/46-O.S. I, pp. 8-9/notes, National Archives of India.
2. The report submitted on 13 October 1946 by the official delegation led by Maharaj Singh to East Africa to examine the proposed restrictions on immigration into Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar concluded that the bills would in practice adversely affect Indian immigration much more than that of Europeans, and that the provisions of the bills were extremely stringent and would encroach on the liberty and security of individuals.

document for any length of time. There is nothing confidential about it and the public, within India and East Africa, are entitled to have it. Our subsequent policy would thus be partly based on public reactions to the report. The first step to be taken is to send copies of the report to H.M.G. and the East African Governments. After some interval, say 2 or 3 weeks, it should be published. In the event of a demand in the Assembly for earlier publication this should be acceded to.

There appears to be no necessity for placing this matter immediately before the Cabinet. Our previous views have only been strengthened and confirmed by the report. The report should be sent to all Members of the Cabinet and to H.E. Somewhat later when we hear from H.M.G. or if any further development takes place, this may be placed before the Cabinet.

The draft telegram is detailed enough. The reference to 'Confidential' (regarding the report) should be removed from it. Our final demand should also be stronger. We must ask for withdrawal of the bills[3] and point out that Indian opinion will inevitably consider H.M.G. responsible for the policy embedded in the bills. As a result the relations of India with H.M.G. will be gravely affected. If the bills cannot be withdrawn immediately they must at least be postponed and the necessity for the measures fully enquired into. The report before us shows that there is no such necessity.

3. The office had suggested that only a postponement of the bills be sought.

38. Indo-Australian Relations[1]

I welcome the Australian industrial delegates.[2] I am sure India is destined to play an important role in the future trade relations between the two countries.

As for the all Asian Conference to be held next year, besides invitations to the Asiatic countries, invitations have been sent to Australia and New Zealand to attend the Conference as observers or in any other capacity they may prefer.

I hope that the Australian delegation will not only investigate the future trade possibilities between the two countries but also make friends in this country.

1. Speech at New Delhi, 27 October 1946. From *The Hindu*, 28 October 1946.
2. The Australian trade mission toured India from 24 October to 14 December 1946 at the invitation of the Indian Government.

39. Withdrawal of Indian Troops from Indonesia[1]

The present position is that Indian troops will be withdrawn from Indonesia[2] at the latest by the end of November. I believe some delay has occurred partly owing to shipping difficulties, transport etc. But there is no doubt that this decision that has been made is being carried out, and by the end of November we hope it will be complete.

The Honourable Member will appreciate that the kind of assurance[3] he asks from me is not very easy to give; but I will give him an assurance that so far as this Government is concerned, we are not going to tolerate any delays or any subterfuges in the way of getting our troops back from Indonesia.

1. Reply to Sardar Mangal Singh's motion on the "failure of the Government of India to arrange the withdrawal of Indian troops from Indonesia" in the Legislative Assembly on 28 October 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report,* Vol. VII, 1946, 28 October 1946 - 11 November 1946, p. 103.
2. British and Indian troops landed in Java in the winter of 1945-46 with the aim of disarming Japanese forces and liberating Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees. On 28 February 1946, Auchinleck announced that the withdrawal of Indian troops would commence on 1 March 1946.
3. Abdul Rahman Siddiqui sought an assurance that in case the Netherlands Government were unable to dispatch their own soldiers there would be no delay beyond the 30th November in withdrawing Indian troops from Indonesia.

40. To Edward Atiyah[1]

New Delhi
October 31, 1946

Dear Mr Atiyah,[2]
Thank you for your letter of 16th September and your book. It is difficult for me now to find much time for reading books, but a slight indisposition confined me to bed and I took to your autobiography.[3] Both the subject and the manner of writing interested me greatly. It is one of the few books that I must read through and I am grateful to you for having sent it.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Edward Selim Atiyah (1903-1964); Lebanese writer; lecturer in history, Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, 1926-27; Public Relations Officer, Sudan Government, 1927-45; Secretary, Arab Office, London, 1945-50; Press Adviser, Iraq Embassy, London, 1956-58.
3. *An Arab Tells His Story* (1946).

For a number of reasons I have been greatly interested in Arab affairs. Your book will give me a greater understanding of them. I am sure that there must be a great deal of mutual understanding and cooperation between India and the Arab countries.

With all good wishes to you.

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

41. An Official Approach to the Soviet Union[1]

I agree with much that Mr. Weightman has written.[2] It is desirable to make an official approach to the U.S.S.R. now after the non-official approach which Mr. Krishna Menon made in Paris. I feel however that this official approach should be a continuation of the previous meeting and what transpired there. A new man would be out of touch with that and there may be difficulties. Given this Krishna Menon it appears has been in touch with the Russian Charge d'affaires in London regarding the visit in November. It would be unfortunate and rather unbecoming to drop him from this at this stage. But quite apart from questions of *amour-propre*, I think it would be advantageous for the two Menons to be associated in this undertaking. The question of procedure may be a little awkward but need not trouble us. K.P.S. Menon will bring all the training and diplomatic experience and Krishna Menon, though he has not had that official training, is a man of extraordinary ability and wide experience in foreign affairs.

I agree that Krishna Menon might be appointed our special representative in Europe charged with the task of initiating semi-official approaches to selected European countries on the issue of the exchange of representation at levels to be determined later. He may also discuss food, cultural and like matters. I would personally prefer him to work in an honorary capacity but this is not important. Anyhow he will have to be given a small staff or some assistants.

1. Note, 1 November 1946. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 20(4)-EUR/47, pp. 27-28/notes, National Archives of India.
2. In his note of 30 October 1946 Weightman had suggested, as a follow-up action on receipt of Molotov's letter showing interest in exchange of diplomatic representatives, sending K.P.S. Menon to Moscow to discuss technical details. He was against sending Krishna Menon on a joint mission to Moscow and instead suggested his appointment as official representative in Europe with the task of initiating semi-official approaches to selected countries for the exchange of diplomatic representatives.

I agree also that we should not try to spread out too much to begin with. Paris would be indicated for our embassy or legation. The only other that might be important is Prague.

I suggest therefore that Mr. Krishna Menon should be appointed our representative for the special purpose named above and for a temporary period—preferably in an honourary capacity. Further that he and Mr. K.P.S. Menon be appointed to go together to Moscow after the U.N. General Assembly. They are both in New York now and so is M. Molotov and the dates of the visit can be arranged easily.

This matter should be expedited so that full instructions can be sent soon.

42. Air Traffic between the United States and India[1]

I have read the report[2] presented by our representatives. I think it is an excellent report, exhaustive and clear. The various viewpoints have been brought out and the various implications discussed.

The present approach to the Government of India has been made at the highest level and General Brownell has come as the representative of the President of the U.S.A. It has been made quite clear that the U.S. Government is taking considerable interest in the outcome of our negotiations. As has been pointed out in the report, pressure was sought to be brought upon us in various ways previously by the U.S.[3] We resisted that pressure in the past and any undue pressure must be resisted now also. Nevertheless, we have to take into consideration the political aspect of the matter and avoid doing anything which would lead us into unnecessary conflict with the U.S. or create ill will between the two countries.

The two main considerations that have to be borne in mind are:—

(1) Our desire to help in the development of international air services, not only for international reasons but for national reasons also because they lead indirectly to the development of national air services.

1. Notes written to Eric Coates on 31 October and 4 November 1946 on the negotiations regarding the civil aviation agreement between U.S.A. and India. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 486-FEA/46, pp. 67-72, National Archives of India.
2. The report presented on 22 October 1946 dealt with the general background, different types of air operations, regulation of capacity, terminal points, traffic rates and routes.
3. The Americans attempted to retain in their possession certain radio equipment they had installed on Indian airfields during the war and to retain possession and control over certain key airfields like Karachi.

(2) Our desire to protect and develop Indian air services and not to commit ourselves to anything which may come in the way in future of such development.

As a result of protracted negotiations between our representatives and those of the U.S., a large measure of agreement has been arrived at and the area of dispute has been narrowed down. In paragraph 29 of the report four disputed points still outstanding are mentioned.[4] In effect these can be reduced to two as (a) and (b) go together and (d) has practically been agreed to by our representatives. The two disputed points are:

(i) the proposed Article IX of the Agreement together with a clarification of the principles in Article IV, and
(ii) the reservation of Fifth Freedom traffic[5] between India and Burma and India and Ceylon.

Article IX,[6] as proposed by the U.S. representatives, has been accepted conditionally by our representatives subject to clarification of Article IV. Thus all that remains for us is to consider this clarification. It is obviously desirable to have precision about such matters so as to avoid any future misunderstanding. The Indian draft is clearer and more precise and, therefore, preferable. I think we should accept Article IX as proposed by the U.S. and generally agree with the Indian draft for Article IV leaving it to our representatives to vary the draft if they consider this is necessary with a view to agreement.

For the purpose of air traffic we are entitled to consider Burma and Ceylon as within the Indian sphere. I think the suggested compromise agreement by which traffic would be booked exclusively by Indian air lines and that they would be given the option of carrying it themselves if they can or of loading it into American air lines, was a suitable compromise. It appears that this was not later accepted by Washington. I think that we must adhere to some kind of a reservation of Fifth Freedom rights in this traffic. Our representatives may be given freedom to explore other avenues of compro-

4. The difference concerned the wording of Article IV, which said that, in order to maintain equilibrium between the capacity of the air services and the requirements of the public, the capacity to be operated by each airline across the territory of the other party would be subject to mutual agreement, and Article IX regarding the reservation of traffic between India and Burma and India and Ceylon, and the number of routes.
5. This was the right of either an Indian or U.S. airline to pick up and set down traffic between two countries other than India or U.S.A.
6. It read that each contracting party reserved the right to withhold, revoke or impose appropriate conditions.

mise provided that the rights of Indian air lines going to Ceylon and Burma are sufficiently protected.

Generally speaking, I agree with the report and the recommendations made. At the same time I am anxious that a friendly settlement should be arrived at with the U.S. in regard to this matter. Not only for political reasons but in order to encourage air services in India, it is desirable to have such an agreement. We have to consider Indian interests only in this connection and not other possible interests in the future. It is clear that for a year or more there would be hardly any Indian air line operating between India and Europe, though possibly they might operate to China and Egypt. So that in the near future there is not likely to be much conflict between the American air services and the Indian air services and the establishment of the American services will undoubtedly give a fillip to the development of Indian air services within India and neighbouring countries.

It seems to me that the possibility of some Board of Arbiration has not been sufficiently explored. There is a reference to an appeal being made to Picao.[7] In every such agreement it is always desirable to have a small body to which a reference can be made in case of dispute or misrepresentation. Whether the Picao is appropriate or not I do not know. In any event, this should not come in the way of precision in the agreement which should not have vague clauses which can be interpreted in many ways. Having made the agreement as precise as possible, we might still have some reference to possible arbitration case of a disputed interpretation or any change made on one side which is not agreeable to the other.

For my part, I attach more importance to our reservation of Fifth Freedom rights in Burma and Ceylon than to the other point in dispute. The other point has been largely covered by Article IX as proposed by the U.S. I do not think it should be difficult to have a clarification of Article IV as suggested on our behalf.

We have come so near to agreement that it would be a great pity to fail on some relatively minor issue.

Since writing the above I have looked through the draft agreement more carefully and I find that Articles X and XI provide for frequent consultation and some kind of arbitration. I should imagine that these provisions are enough for our purpose.

I have also received since writing the above a letter from General Brownell[8] dated October 31st. It is evident that the chief difficulty of the United States representatives is the inclusion of any clause or language in their

7. Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization.
8. Leader of U.S. delegation.

agreement with us which will affect their other agreements. A variety of agreements with incompatible clauses may well interfere with the development of international air traffic. There is some force in Mr. Brownell's argument and we should try not to put in anything in our agreement which may conflict with other agreements. Nevertheless, we cannot accept anything which is going to injure our future development. I think we have arrived at a stage when careful drafting might get over the difficulty. Our representatives have succeeded to a great extent in gaining their objectives. I hope they will succeed in regard to the remaining two points also without doing injury to what is called the fundamental point of United States International aviation policy. In the development of our air lines in future American goodwill and assistance are likely to go a long way and it is worthwhile gaining them if we have not got to pay too heavy a price.

Since writing the above note I have had a talk with Sir Eric Coates[9] who has informed me of the latest developments. It appears that our draft in regard to the principles governing 'capacity' has been sent to the United States Government for their approval. The present position, therefore, is that the United States Government might agree to our interpretation of 'capacity' while on the other point, that is, the resolution on Fifth Freedom rights in Burma and Ceylon, they are wholly unable to agree. It appears to me from general opinion on our side that the former question, that is one relating to 'capacity', is the more important of the two as, in a sense, it covers traffic to Burma and Ceylon also. In regard to the Fifth Freedom rights in Burma and Ceylon the American contention has some strength because if contiguous countries are in its way then these principles can be applied by other countries to its neighbours. I think, therefore, that if we can get an agreement in regard to principles governing 'capacity', we should not break on the issue of Burma and Ceylon.

2. I have consulted most of my colleagues in the Cabinet and they are also of this opinion that even in the event of there being no immediate agreement in regard to the 'capacity' question, we should not press the Burma and Ceylon issue so as to make the United States Government consider the 'capacity' question by itself without any other complicating matters. I am quite sure that there will be an agreement if we proceed in this manner, and that this agreement will be on the whole advantageous to India as well as to international aviation.

9. Leader of the Indian delegation.

43. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

14 November 1946

As you well know, our general attitude is to avoid entanglements with groups, and the two main groups in the world today are well known. On the one side it may well be argued that a partiality on our part towards Russia will irritate the U.S.A. and its satellites. On the other hand there is always the danger of our becoming ourselves satellites of the Anglo-American group, which indeed we had been in a large measure during the past. We have to steer a middle course not merely because of expediency but also because we consider it the right course. Personally I think that in this world tug-of-war there is on the whole more reason on the side of Russia, not always of course. If Russia helps us and speaks for us, it is right for us to express our gratitude and our friendliness. Not to do so for fear of offending America or England or of losing some votes would be to become totally ineffective and untrue to ourselves. Only those are respected, as individuals or as nations, who have the strength to speak frankly whatever they have in their minds and not be afraid all the time of the results of frankness. Yet obviously too much frankness may break up the best of friendships and one has to draw the line somewhere. These are just vague thoughts I am putting forward before you. The decision always will have to be made by you or by others on the spot. I do not want you[2] or our delegation to become camp-followers of the Russian group; still less do I want you to hover around the British Commonwealth group.

I was very glad to read your reference to Goa in the U.N. General Assembly.[3] We have appointed Rashid Ali Baig as Consul there because we attach importance to the developing situation there. He has taken charge. It was my intention to write separately to Krishna and K.P.S. But I have written to you at very great length and I have no more time left. I think you had better share this letter with both of them. It is desirable that they should know how my mind is working and what our difficulties here are. All of us, whether here or abroad, have our particular viewpoints and feel strongly about them. We are conditioned by our own experiences and our convictions. Nevertheless we have to adjust ourselves to each other provided

1. As printed in *The Indian Nationalist Movement 1885-1947: Select Documents* (London, 1979), pp. 204-205, edited by B.N. Pandey.
2. Vijayalakshmi Pandit was the head of the Indian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly.
3. On 8 November 1946, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, opposing the application of Portugal for admission to the United Nations, had said that civil liberties in Goa had been severely curtailed and people opposing the authorities there were often tried by court martial and awarded inhuman sentences.

we do not give up any vital principle and have to pull together. In this grave crisis that we are passing through in India we have to be careful not to add to the disruptive tendencies. Foreign affairs, highly important and vital as they are, ultimately depend upon the internal situation in the country. This internal situation demands cohesion and a certain caution. We cannot always do what we want to do for in an attempt to do so we may arrive at contrary results. One thing is clear—that in our foreign policy we must not be bound by British policy and we should avoid being influenced too much by them. At the same time we should not obviously break with them, though of course on any particular issue we have every right to break if we feel that way. Generally speaking we have to be on friendly terms with both Russia and America.

44. On Krishna Menon's Press Message[1]

I did not like this press message.[2] It is always difficult to know who is responsible. Sometimes a private conversation is blazoned forth. Anyway I propose to write to Krishna Menon about it.

1. Note to H. Weightman, 15 November 1946. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 20(4)-EUR/47, pp. 29-30/notes, National Archives of India.
2. Weightman had drawn Nehru's attention to Krishna Menon's announcement in the American press about his tour and suggested that a slight rebuke be sent to him and he be told not to commit himself to any publicity regarding official matters without Government's specific assent.

45. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
17 November 1946

My dear Krishna,
I haven't written to you for some time. I sent a long letter, however, to my sister two or three days ago which I asked her to share with you.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Although you are far away, you will realise the extraordinarily difficult conditions we have to face in India at present. Almost every part of India is in a state of acute tension and this bursts out in wholesale murder in many places. Life is very cheap and the effect on the general population can well be imagined. We can, of course, trace the causes for all this, but for the moment this actual situation confronts us and, situated as we are, we cannot easily deal with it. Of course the Viceroy and the British element in the services strengthen their position because of all this and we are proportionately weakened.

3. Apart from this, there is a continual crisis in the Interim Government ever since the Muslim League came in. The approaching date of the Constituent Assembly promises to bring this crisis to a head. The Viceroy and others have been functioning more and more openly as if they were allied with the Muslim League. It is now their intention to postpone the Constituent Assembly meeting for some months. Indeed there is no suitable date for it if it is postponed from December till April next as the Budget session of the Assembly will meet from 20th January to the end of March. Apart from the undesirability of this postponement, it is just truckling to the Muslim League. The League came into the Interim Government on the express understanding, so we were told, that they were accepting the long-term plan of the Cabinet Delegation. Now it is said that because they have not so far accepted this plan, therefore the Constituent Assembly should be postponed. There is going to be trouble about this. The fact that the Congress is going to be held next week means that we cannot allow matters to slide.

4. These are two major issues. There are many other conflicts going on. It seems clear that so far as the Viceroy and his lot are concerned here, they are bent on giving us as much trouble as possible. Whether the Government in England will check them or not I do not know. Obviously we cannot tolerate this kind of thing going on, and so anything may happen.

5. Having given full consideration to the existing situation and to the various difficulties in our way, I have come to the conclusion that the best course for us to follow about your work is what I have already suggested in my letter to my sister, i.e., that we might appoint you officially to represent the Government of India for the purpose of exploring possibilities of diplomatic representation in a number of European countries. Your approach would be informal as it was in the case of Molotov. After your report, formal approaches will be made. To begin with, it would not be possible for us to open a Legation in every capital, but it would be better to have one principal Legation or Embassy, say, in Paris and possibly at Prague. The neighbour-

ing countries would be attached to these Embassies for the time being. We haven't got enough men to go round.

6. About Russia you have already gone far informally with Molotov. The next step has to be a formal approach on behalf of the Government of India. It is proposed that this should be made by an official, and it is suggested that K.P.S. Menon might do it on our behalf. Naturally K.P.S. Menon should be introduced to Molotov from this point of view, and it should be explained that this step is being taken so that an official approach might now be made to expedite matters.

7. I was anxious that you should yourself go to Russia at this stage, but there are a great many difficulties here which I cannot easily explain in this letter. The Muslim League, of course, is out to create trouble. Even others think that in existing circumstances we should not fight on this issue both the League and the permanent services and the Viceroy. To some extent the repeated references in newspapers of your functioning as my Personal Envoy have irritated a number of people. It has been said that this kind of publicity was not desirable and does not fit in with a diplomatic envoy.

8. I hope you will appreciate our difficulties at this end and accept the arrangement I have suggested above. The matter will probably be considered in Cabinet very soon, and I shall communicate the decisions by telegram to you. These decisions should be carried out in the best possible way so that no doubt or controversy arises in public.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

46. To K.P.S. Menon[1]

New Delhi
17 November 1946

My dear K.P.S.,
Thank you for your letter. Three days ago I wrote a long letter to my sister and asked her to show it to you. That will have given you some idea of our position here and of our various difficulties. Also I indicated some possible

1. J.N. Collection.

steps we might take about Europe and Russia. The matter will come up before the Cabinet in two or three days' time, probably before you get this letter, and I shall communicate to you the decisions. Our present intention is to ask Krishna Menon to visit European countries on behalf of the Government of India, and to ask you to go officially to Russia to discuss details about the exchange of diplomatic representatives.[2] This must now be done on the official level. It will be desirable to explain all these to Molotov in New York. Krishna Menon and my sister should do this and you might have a preliminary talk with Molotov there.

2. I appreciate what you say about our not irritating the American bloc and losing their votes because of our exuberant attitude towards Russia. Exuberance anyhow is misplaced in such matters and we have to keep clear of entanglements. Nevertheless I do believe that only a strong and straightforward attitude pays in the long run. We are in the best of bargaining positions and there is absolutely no reason why we should weaken or play second fiddle to anybody. It may be that we may lose a few votes or displease some people. But in the long run and even in the short run respect for us will grow. I am more anxious to make the world feel that we have got a will of our own than to gain a seat in any committee or council. I do not want to function on the sufferance of anybody. If any nation or group of nations wants to be tough with us, well we can be tough with them also. In fact while their toughness may keep us out of a council, I think our toughness will have more far-reaching results for them. We play for high stakes and I do not mind losing the first round or two.

3. I am very glad that our delegation has, on the whole, shown that it is tough and has put our case strongly without fear or favour. I have no doubt that this has displeased many people, but it is about time they knew that they have to deal with a new India which will not tolerate the old practices.

4. You might show this letter to my sister.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. It was announced on 1 December 1946 that the Government of India had appointed K.P.S. Menon, Agent-General and Ambassador designate to China, as special representative to visit Moscow and discuss with the Soviet Government arrangements preliminary to the exchange of diplomatic representatives.

47. To Madame Chiang[1]

I am grateful to you and the Generalissimo for your message of greeting and good wishes.[2] In the midst of all our problems here, we think often of you and of China and look forward to the day when both China and India having overcome their present difficulties will rapidly advance in friendship and cooperation with each other as free and democratic nations. All good wishes to you and to the Generalissimo.

1. Printed in the *National Herald*, 18 November 1946.
2. "Generalissimo and I send you our heartiest greetings on your birthday. We hope and pray that you will enjoy continued good health and long life and that success will crown your unremitting efforts in working for the welfare of the Indian people. This sentiment also represents, I am certain, that of the whole Chinese nation".

48. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
20 November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
You spoke to me about the proposal to send K.P.S. Menon to Moscow and Krishna Menon to some countries in Europe to explore possibilities of further contacts.[2] You told me that this matter had been taken out of today's Cabinet agenda, and suggested that I might discuss it with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan.[3]

2. The delay might come in the way of our arrangements, and I hope that the matter will be disposed of as soon as possible. At the present moment all the parties concerned are attending the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, and it will be easy to fix up programmes and future arrangements with them. If this is not done soon then there will be considerable delay. As a matter of fact, informal conversations have been going on for some time and any gap now will be misunderstood.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. In an interview with Nehru on 19 November 1946, Wavell questioned the wisdom of sending Krishna Menon on a tour of European countries without discussing the matter with the Muslim League.
3. Later, in his letter of 25 November 1946, Wavell agreed to include this matter on the agenda for the next Cabinet meeting but thought that for the working of any coalition ministry it was useful to hold informal discussions of controversial subjects.

3. The proposal is not at present to appoint any individual to a particular post. It is only to ask Krishna Menon, who is eminently suited for this kind of work, to visit certain European countries and informally discuss diplomatic or other contacts with India. He is to make no commitments but to report to us at the end of about two months. It was my intention to ask him to visit Moscow also in continuation of his talks with Molotov. This would have been the proper thing to do. All this was to have been on the informal plane and no commitments were to be made. On further consideration, however, I thought it better to put the Moscow talks on a formal official plane, and, therefore, decided that K.P.S. Menon, one of our senior officers in the External Affairs Department, should go to Moscow on his way back to India. If it is preferred, it is easily possible to ask Krishna Menon to include Moscow in his itinerary.

4. All this being of an exploratory character and naturally following from recent contacts is hardly a matter for Cabinet decision.[4] Nevertheless I thought it desirable for the Cabinet to be informed and to give its approval to these steps. Later, of course, the whole matter would come up, when it is ripe for decision, before the Cabinet.

5. I feel that any delay on our part at this stage would prove embarrassing to us and might create other difficulties. Hence my desire to expedite this question.

6. As for the Muslim League Members being consulted, it has been my practice to consult the Members of the Government at every step in regard to all the matters that come up before us. In accordance with this practice, this question of Krishna Menon and K.P.S. Menon visiting a number of places was placed by me before my colleagues on two or three occasions. Unfortunately, as you know, the Muslim League Members of Government do not choose to attend our informal meetings. Because of this they do not take part in these consultations. This is not very courteous or desirable from any point of view. I can't seek them out to consult them on specific issues. This would be a wrong procedure and an encouragement of intransigence. Normally I would gladly consult them, but if they keep away, it is not my fault.

7. I do not know how any communal question arises here and even if it did, there must be opportunities of consultation before we could take advantage of them. In foreign policy, even more than in domestic policy, it is essential to have a certain uniform outlook and continuity. It is not a

4. Nehru reiterated this view in his letter to Wavell dated 21 November 1946. See *ante*, section 3(II), item 46.

question of providing posts for individuals, but of having an effective and uniform policy. Unless we know definitely what the policy approved of by the Muslim League is in regard to these matters, we cannot take the risk of upsetting the general policy we intend to pursue or of creating other difficulties.

8. At the present moment the policy which the Muslim League has proclaimed is that it does not propose to work as a team or in the spirit of a coalition even. Two of its prominent members are at the present moment delivering mischievous and harmful speeches in America. They are condemning our Government as well as our delegation at the U.N.O. These two members were given every facility to go to America at the instance, I am told, of India Office, and special priorities were given to them for the purpose. It seems to me obvious that there can be no joint working if there is no spirit to have such cooperation and when the objectives aimed at differ completely. Pakistan is not a subject which should enter our foreign policy whatever its merits or demerits might be. And yet it is the Pakistan issue that is raised by representatives of Muslim League everywhere. They don't appear to be interested in anything else. No Government can appoint people to important positions unless they represent a general policy.

9. I trust that the proposal to send our representatives to Moscow and some European capitals will be considered soon by the Cabinet.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

49. Contact with Overseas Indians[1]

In order to establish a close contact between India and her nationals ab oad it is proposed to send Indian representatives to various colonies, especially where they are in a large number. It is possible we may send roving commissions to inquire about their condition and ask them to submit their reports after examining them from different aspects.

The other agency to be contacted is the Foreign Department of A.I.C.C., which would render all possible help to the overseas Indians, in certain cases more than official agencies.

1. Talk to a delegation of overseas Indians at Meerut on 24 November 1946. From *National Herald*, 25 November 1946.

In any event, arrangements should be made for frequent and full exchange of information between India and her children abroad. There should be information centres in all colonies and settlements of Indians abroad where newspapers and periodicals from India should be available. In the same way in India there should be such centres which could supply full information about Indians overseas.

50. Withdrawal of Troops from Japan[1]

I do not see any objections to this withdrawal of British troops from Japan.[2] Indeed we should withdraw our troops from Japan also. They are not needed now.

1. Note written on 28 November 1946, Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 325-FEA/46, pp. 1-2/corr., National Archives of India.
2. The British Government wanted to know the views of the Government of India on their proposal to withdraw about 3500 men of the British brigade group from Japan because of their manpower difficulty but assured that they still wished "to maintain as far as possible the Commonwealth character of the force."

51. To Lord Wavell[1]

New Delhi
29th November 1946

Dear Lord Wavell,
I have just received your letter of the 28th November regarding the appointment of our Ambassador at Washington. I had mentioned this matter to you in the course of a recent interview. I had previously discussed it with the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Weightman. I then spoke to Mr. Asaf Ali about it and mentioned it to you. Thereupon I asked the Foreign Secretary to take necessary steps in the matter and I believe he has communicated with H.M.G. We are awaiting their reply.

1. J.N. Collection.

You might remember that I also mentioned to you two other appointments which we were then considering. One of these was for Malaya and the other for Ceylon. The Secretary of the Commonwealth Relations Department[2] had suggested to me Mr. Subbarayan's name for Malaya and Mr. N. Raghavan's name for Ceylon. I approved of his suggestions and asked him to find out if the persons named were agreeable to undertake this responsibility. I am not quite sure if he has received any final replies yet.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. R.N. Banerjee.

52. Two Tasks Ahead[1]

Indians must themselves resolve whatever problems they have to face and their methods and approach should be peaceful and cooperative even though they may differ among themselves. We should approach our work in a spirit of cooperation and forbearance and avoid all incitements to violent methods. Unfortunately we have had a good deal of violence in India recently. We are not going to solve any problem that way. Violence breeds violence and we move around in a vicious circle.

I have come here after eight years—eight very fateful years in human history. I am glad to be here because I have many friends in Britain whom I wanted to meet for a long time. I am only sorry that my visit must be a very brief one, for I must be back in India for the Constituent Assembly.

I wish I could spend more time in England in order to meet both Indian and British friends. Perhaps some time later I might be able to pay a longer visit but at the present time my mind is occupied with the events in India and I want to be there to carry on my work. We have to face a difficult situation not only in India but everywhere. This requires an attempt on the part of all of us to cooperate for big tasks ahead which include not only the achievement of the independence of India but also social changes in order to raise the standard of living of the masses and remove the many burdens they suffer from.

1. Interview to Fraser Wighton, Reuter's political correspondent, London, 3 December 1946. From *The Hindu*, 4 December 1946.

These two objects must be common to all Indians, however much they may differ about other matters. It is, therefore, of great importance that they should all face their work in a spirit of cooperation and forbearance avoiding all incitements to violent methods.

I am happy to learn that the Joint Committee of the United Nations General Assembly has passed by a majority a resolution which means complete vindication of the cause of Indians in South Africa. This justifies our confidence in the United Nations. I would like to express my gratitude particularly to the nations which espoused India's cause and made its success possible. In particular I am grateful to France, Mexico, Egypt, the U.S.S.R., Ukraine and Poland. This decision affects not only India but the world, for it means that a majority of world opinion, as represented in the United Nations, has set its face against discrimination on grounds of race or colour.

This is a vital decision, which, if acted upon in future, will remove one of the major causes of international conflict.

53. To G.S. Bajpai[1]

London
5 December 1946

My dear Bajpai,

I have been wanting to write to you for a long time, but could not do so. Life has been a continuous rush in India or elsewhere.

2. You know that we have chosen Asaf Ali as our Ambassador for Washington.[2] I suppose he will be going there some time in January. We are anxious to have public men as our Ambassadors as far as possible, more especially in regard to our first appointments. I hope you do not think that this is in any way a slight on you. I have not agreed with much you have done in the past,[3] as indeed I do not agree with what might be considered the I.C.S. outlook on anything. I definitely think that every effort will have to be made to get rid of this I.C.S. outlook in India in so far as our Indian civilians are concerned. The British civilians will, of course, have to go.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Asaf Ali was appointed ambassador to the U.S.A. on 6 December 1946.
3. From 1941 to 1946 Bajpai had been Agent-General for India in the U.S.A. In that capacity he was responsible for assisting British propaganda against the Congress in the United States.

You might remember that I also mentioned to you two other appointments which we were then considering. One of these was for Malaya and the other for Ceylon. The Secretary of the Commonwealth Relations Department[2] had suggested to me Mr. Subbarayan's name for Malaya and Mr. N. Raghavan's name for Ceylon. I approved of his suggestions and asked him to find out if the persons named were agreeable to undertake this responsibility. I am not quite sure if he has received any final replies yet.

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I feel, however, that you as well as many others, though not all, have not only ability but are quite capable of adapting yourself to the new India that is taking shape. This new India will lack, above everything, trained human material to begin with.

3. I am quite sure that we shall require your services for important and responsible work, where and how I do not know just at present. As you must know, we are passing through difficult times in India and the future is rather vague and uncertain. In these circumstances it is not easy to make plans too far ahead. Still plans have to be made and will be made.

4. I was thinking that it might be desirable, if you agree to it, for you to continue at Washington as Asaf Ali's second in command. I suppose this would mean the post of Counsellor though I am not fully acquainted with the hierarchy. If a Minister's position is higher than that of a Counsellor, then you could occupy that. There is not much in a name. The point is that I should like you to be there for some time at least to be next to Asaf Ali in the Embassy. You are fully acquainted with American conditions and ways as well as with the technique of the work and you could be of great help to Asaf Ali who will be new to the task. This arrangement could continue till some new arrangement is made for you.[4] It would be a pity for you to do nothing at all just waiting for things to happen. I am writing this on my own personal initiative as the idea struck me the other day. I have not put this to my Department yet.

5. I am returning to India on the 7th morning reaching Delhi on the 8th evening.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Bajpai had been charge d'affaires in the Indian embassy in Washington since November 1946. Later he was recalled and posted as Officer on Special Duty in the Foreign Office. In June 1947, he was appointed Secretary-General.

54. To K.P.S. Menon[1]

London
5 December 1946

My dear K.P.S.,
I wanted to write to you a rather long letter. But I fear this is impossible now.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

My very brief visit to England has been terribly full and I am just rushing back to India.

2. Our U.N.O. delegation was our first venture on a somewhat different plane from those previously. I am very much interested in examining the success and failures of this venture for guidance in the future. In some ways the delegation has done well. But in some other ways it has shown up our numerous deficiencies. My sister has written to me fairly fully on the subject and I propose to discuss it further with her on her return to India. She has pointed out many failings of this delegation both as a group and as individuals. Krishna Menon has given me his viewpoint. I should have liked to have a full talk with you also and to get your impressions and viewpoints. We must function in such conferences and elsewhere as a first-rate team with a definite policy of our own. There should, of course, be complete group work. This seems to have been lacking and our policies too seem rather confused, and there is a tendency to adapt ourselves to this or that varying policy initiated by others. To some extent this is inevitable, but this should not be allowed to go far and we shall certainly have a very definite policy of our own in future.

3. You know that you have been asked to go to Moscow on your way back to India and Krishna Menon has been asked to visit a number of European capitals. About your Moscow visit I have asked Mrs. Pandit to meet Molotov and explain to him that you are going on our behalf so that the various technical matters that have to be discussed now, after Krishna Menon's informal talks, should be considered on an official and formal plane. Naturally your business will be to fix up as far as possible all these details and technicalities about the exchange of diplomatic representatives, their residence etc. Larger questions of policy will have to be considered and decided by us in India. It is my intention to visit Russia some time fairly early next year if I can manage it and if the Russian Government is agreeable to this proposal. I have asked Mrs. Pandit to mention this to Molotov. While you will not enter into discussions of policy with Molotov, I should like you to make him realise that our approach is a very friendly one and is an independent one not depending in any way on the British Foreign Office. As you well know, there is not much love lost between the Russian Foreign Office and the British Foreign Office. Indeed Mr. Bevin's[2] foreign policy is coming in for a good deal of criticism in Labour circles in England and I would not be surprised if a change takes place in this policy during the next few months. Anyway we are certainly not parties to British foreign policy or the old methods of the British Foreign Office. What our policy should be will be determined

2. Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary in the Labour Government, 1945-51.

by us later. But we hope that it will be based on friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union. I mention all this because Russians have grown up very suspicious of all approaches and we have, therefore, to be extra cautious.

4. I received your second letter in Delhi just before my departure. Thank you for it. Will you please tell the secretaries of our U.N.O. delegation that I shall expect a full and detailed report of the activities of our delegation from them? This should include not only an account of the work of the delegation as a whole but some account of the work of each member of the delegation in his respective field.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

55. To Georges Bidault[1]

The 10th December 1946

Excellency,

I have the honour to address this note to you by the hand of Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon, who has been deputed by the Government of India as their Special Representative to visit Your Excellency. The Government of India wish to conduct informal and exploratory conversations regarding the possibility of opening direct diplomatic relations between India and France. They sincerely hope that the opening of such relations will be of material advantage to both countries, and that Your Excellency will agree in principle that diplomatic representatives should be exchanged at the earliest possible date.

The Government of India request you to receive Mr. Krishna Menon who will present to you the greetings of the Government and people of India. They trust that as a result of these conversations, it will be possible for our two Governments to agree in principle on strengthening their mutual ties by an early exchange of diplomatic missions.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my most distinguished consideration.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. I-EUR/47, p. 18/corr., National Archives of India. Bidault was at this time Minister for External Affairs of France. Similar letters were sent to the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

56. On Indian Soldiers Fighting for Indonesia[1]

It is clear that we cannot ask for these Indian troops[2] back without assuring them that no action will be taken against them. I feel that it must be made clear that they can return freely. Any possibility of action against them would not only be contrary to our general policy but will also be considered highly objectionable by the Indonesian Government. I think we might wait, as suggested, for the ratification of the Dutch-Indonesian agreement and then take up the matter afresh with the Indonesian Republic.

1. Note to Baldev Singh reproduced by Tarlok Singh in his note of 11 December 1946. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 130-FEA/47, pp. 1-2/n., National Archives of India.
2. The Allied authorites estimated them to number 730 men including 200 in Sumatra and demanded their surrender. Shahrir informally told the army authorities that he was not prepared to hand them over unless there was a guarantee that they would not be treated as ordinary deserters.

57. Expansion of the Foreign Department[1]

I have read the note prepared by Mr. Trevelyan,[2] dated the 12th December,[3] as well as the various other nφtes prepared by him in regard to the development of our Foreign Service. He has evidently worked out the various schemes in some detail and with considerable care. It is hardly possible for me to offer any useful comments on the details of the schemes, as I do not possess the necessary knowledge of the working of Foreign Services in other countries. Probably, different Foreign Offices pursue somewhat

1. Note, 20 December 1946. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 2 (1)-FSP/47, pp. 22-24/n., National Archives of India.
2. Humphrey (now Lord) Trevelyan (b. 1905); entered Indian Civil Service, 1929; Indian Political Service, 1932-47; Joint Secretary to Government of India in External Affairs Department, 1946; joined British Foreign Service, 1947; charge d'affaires in Peking, 1953-55; Ambassador to Egypt, 1955-56, to Iraq, 1958-61, to U.S.S.R., 1962-65.
3. The note prepared by Trevelyan referred to the development of diplomatic relations with other countries and expansion of the office staff. It also referred to the amalgamation of the External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations Departments.

different methods, though there must be much in common between them. Mr. Trevelyan's scheme is presumably based largely on the British Foreign Office. I suppose this is inevitable, and in the circumstances desirable, because we know more about it and can get help from them in getting further information. The American system might also be usefully referred to, though, perhaps, it is even more elaborate.

2. If we have to develop diplomatic relations with other countries in the world we must necessarily expand our services and our departmental activities very greatly. In the process of this expansion I suggest that care might be taken not to follow any scheme rigidly and not to expand the office disproportionately before it can be properly utilised. While the scheme of work will necessarily have much in common with the practice prevailing in other Foreign Offices, it does not follow that we have to copy them in every detail. We may well develop, to some extent, on our own lines suited to the circumstances existing in this country.

3. Subject to what I have said above, I am in general agreement with the proposals put forward by Mr. Trevelyan. They will have to be examined in greater detail later on, more especially as to what we should do immediately and what later on. While it is inevitable that we should expand our office staff, I hope that the expansion does not go ahead of the actual necessities at a particular time. There is always a danger of rapid expansion which may not be necessary and which may even lead, apart from the expense involved, to overlapping and confusion. In the note it is stated that the principle to be followed should be that there should be more officers and less offices. This is probably correct. But, officers inevitably attach offices and staff to themselves and so huge organisations grow up which it becomes difficult to coordinate. This has been specially noticeable in war-time establishments which involved a great deal of waste of money and human material.

4. It is stated in Mr. Trevelyan's note that no expansion of any kind except on a very small scale can be contemplated *until* the question of accommodation is solved. Presumably, this refers to office accommodation as well as residential. While this is true, I think that it might be possible to use even the accommodation available to better purpose, till more accommodation is available. As for residential accommodation, unfortunately the scale set in New Delhi is probably far higher than that prevailing in some of the big capitals of the world. We shall have to revise these scales, though this is a much wider issue with which E.A.D. is not solely concerned. In view of the expansion of our office in the near future it may even be necessary to think in terms of a new building to house the Foreign Department.

5. The first step to be taken is the initiation of negotiations for the amalgamation of the External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations Departments and for the taking over of the High Commissioner's Office in London from the Commerce Department. This will have to require Cabinet sanction and notes on this subject should, therefore, be prepared for early submission to the Cabinet. Meanwhile, the appropriate departments should be asked to prepare their separate notes and recommendations. It may be desirable for a joint meeting to be held of the three departments concerned to consider these proposals.

6. When I was in London recently I had talks with the High Commissioner[4] there and the Deputy High Commissioner[5] in regard to the India House establishment. They both felt that the present staff there was insufficient. Also, that it was necessary to increase rapidly the Indian element in that staff. This was from the point of view of present requirements. It is obvious that with the conversion of the High Commissioner's Office to something approaching an Embassy, further expansion will be necessary. Mr. Vellodi, the Deputy High Commissioner in London, is preparing a note in regard to present requirements. It was suggested, and I agreed with this suggestion, that Mr. Vellodi might come to India some time early next year to discuss the future organisation of the High Commissioner's Office in London.

7. Sir Akbar Hydari is being placed on special duty in E.A.D. to consider the whole question of the expansion of the Foreign Service, as well as the future of the High Commissioner's Office in London.

8. Proposals for initial changes required in the internal organisation of the Department should be proceeded with, keeping in view what I have said above, and the necessary sanction for them obtained. It might be desirable to obtain that sanction even though we might make the appointments as necessity arises.

9. Data for the 1947-48 estimates and for recruitment to the Indian Foreign Service should also be collected.

10. Inquiries regarding accommodation should certainly be initiated. These inquiries will relate to provisional accommodation or for arrangements for a relatively temporary period. The whole Foreign Office establishment should normally be kept together, as if it is separated and put in different buildings a certain lack of cohesion and waste of time will occur.

4. Samuel Runganadhan.
5. M.K. Vellodi.

11. Presumably, special cyphers will have to be arranged for communication with our foreign representatives.

58. To Asaf Ali[1]

New Delhi
21 December 1946

My dear Asaf,

As I told you the other day, I am anxious to have a long talk with you about your work in Washington. Unfortunately we have both been very busy and I did not think it worthwhile seeing you for a few minutes. I hope that the Constituent Assembly will be over by Monday evening. On Tuesday and Wednesday I should like to have some time with you.

2. I have to discuss with you not only the wider aspects of policy which we should follow in America but also many relatively minor matters which are significant, such as the kind of show we should put up there. Inevitably we have to conform to certain practices and protocol. But I see no reason whatever for our copying the ways of others. Wherever necessary we should conform to our own way in regard to larger policy. We have to be exceedingly careful in our dealings with the State Department. I have not liked at all some things they have done recently in the international sphere as well as in regard to India. Some advice they sent to me a short time back was entirely gratuitous.[2] They sent some kind of similar advice to Egypt also which was resented there. The United States are a great Power and we want to be friendly with them for many reasons. Nevertheless I should like it to be made clear that we do not propose to be subservient to anybody and we do not welcome any kind of patronage. Our approach, while being exceedingly friendly, may become tough if necessity arises, both in regard to political and economic matters. We hold plenty of good cards in our hands and there is no need whatever for us to appear as suppliants before any country.

3. There is the question of staff in the Washington Embassy. You take

1. J.N. Collection.
2. The Acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, said: "It is in the interest of all the United Nations that at this time true statesmanship should surmount any obstacles to the establishment of an Indian Federal Union".

over, of course, the present staff there except in so far as it may have to be changed here and there. Additional staff may have to be appointed. This matter is being looked into by our Department. Persons will have to be chosen for special jobs, such as Economic Adviser etc. They will normally be people connected with our Department.

4. An important consideration will be our relations with the British Embassy in Washington which will have to be friendly but somewhat distant, politically speaking, in order to avoid any appearance of our functioning as an outpost of that Embassy. We are devising a special cypher for us to deal directly with each other.

5. I have informed the Viceroy that Maulana Azad will fill the vacancy caused by your retirement from the Cabinet. So far the question of portfolios has not been finally decided.[3] I am waiting for Rajaji to come back to Delhi and for Wavell to return from London. I hope these matters will be settled in the course of next week and we can then settle also the date of your departure.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. When Maulana Azad replaced Asaf Ali, changes were made in the portfolios held by the nominees of the Congress. Maulana Azad was given the Education Department.

59. Telegram to Aung San[1]

24th December 1946

Your telegram.[2] Your visit here welcome. Shall be glad if you personally will stay with me. Please let me know names designations of your party.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Department of Commonwealth Relations, File No. 30-3/47-O.S. II, p. 12/corr., National Archives of India.
2. Aung San informed Nehru that he would be in India on 2 January 1947 on his way to England.

60. To Marius Moutet[1]

New Delhi
26th December 1946

Dear Monsieur,[2]
I am grateful to you for your message sent from Cairo and for the sentiments of friendship of the French people and the French Republic for the people and the Government of India, that you have been good enough to convey to me. The people of India and the Government of India are anxious to have close and friendly relations with France, and I hope that we shall soon be able to arrange for diplomatic contacts.

We are anxious as you are for the peace of the Far East and South-East Asia. We have been following with grave concern the developments in Indo-China.[3] It was our hope that the recent negotiations between the Vietnam Republic and the French Government would lead to a satisfactory settlement of the problem resulting in the freedom of the Vietminh.[4] The hostilities that have broken out and are apparently being continued there have disturbed Indian opinion greatly. I earnestly trust that a peaceful solution will be found very soon and that France, which has been so long associated with the cause of freedom, will help in establishing freedom and independence in Indo-China also.

Assuring you of our high consideration, I am,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. External Affairs Department File No. 334-FEA/47, Sr. No. 1, National Archives of India.
2. (1876-1968); Minister for the Colonies, 1936-38; Minister of Overseas Territories, January 1946 - October 1947.
3. On 23 November 1946 Haiphong was bombarded and the Vietnamese retaliated by attacking the French in Hanoi on 19 December 1946.
4. The two Franco-Vietnamese conferences held in April and July 1946 broke up without any agreement. The compromise on 14 September only postponed an armed conflict.

61. Message to Indians in Germany[1]

We have been anxious to arrange for the repatriation of Indian nationals from Germany and hope that all of them will be able to return to India soon. We have had many difficulties to face. I hope that Indians coming back from Germany will not make any statements or do anything which might add to our difficulties and come in the way of repatriation of Indian nationals still in Germany. I suggest therefore that public demonstrations in England should be avoided and the instructions issued by our Government and the British authorities concerned for the guidance of the repatriates should be followed.[2]

1. 1 January 1947. Commonwealth Relations Department File No. 79-42/46-O.S.I, p. 7/corr., National Archives of India.
2. This was sent in response to a request from the Indian High Commission in London for an authoritative statement discouraging demonstrations or meetings which might make the work of further repatriation more difficult.

62. Burma and Indo-China[1]

During the last five days Delhi has had an eminent visitor.[2] General Aung San came not as a stranger but as an old friend and comrade in common undertakings. He is shouldering a heavy burden of responsibility and all India will wish him success in his enterprise so that our neighbour country Burma may realise freedom and independence. General Aung San is not merely interested in his own country, but also in developing closer relations between India and Burma and in developing closer unity among the nations of Asia. There is thus a great deal in common between our respective viewpoints and we look forward to close cooperation in many

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 7 January 1947. *The Hindustan Times*, 8 January 1947.
2. On his way to London for talks with the British Government on the independence of Burma, Aung San stopped at Delhi and stayed for five days as Nehru's guest. In Delhi he met the Members of the Interim Government, broadcast from All India Radio and attended a press conference.

fields of activity for the mutual advantage of Burma and India and the development of inter-Asian relations.

In Asia at present there is fierce conflict going on in Indo-China between the French power and Vietnam.[3] It is difficult for us to know all the true facts. But one thing is patent that foreign armed forces are trying to crush Vietnam. India has always had a high regard for France and for all that their country had represented in the history of the struggle for human freedom. We have also appreciated French culture and the high development of the arts in France. It is our hope to draw closer to France in the political and cultural domains. But the attempt of France to crush the spirit of freedom in Indo-China has deeply moved the Indian people who have always stood for the freedom of every part of Asia. Their goodwill for France has been put under a severe strain. Their sympathies inevitably go to the people of Indo-China. I trust that the Government and people of France will realise that the action they have undertaken in Indo-China is having and will continue to have far-reaching repercussions injurious to French prestige in Asia. The prestige of France or of any other country is not going to be kept up by force of arms but by the renunciation of imperialism and the support of human freedom and progress everywhere. Even a military success may yield barren fruit and leave a legacy of hatred and bitter opposition behind it. I earnestly trust, therefore, that the French Republic will revert to peaceful methods in Indo-China and show by its own example that it stands for freedom everywhere.

3. After the fall of Japan in 1945 France tried to set up the Bao Dai Government in Vietnam. Efforts for a negotiated peace having failed the French and Vietnamese forces clashed.

63 To R.K. Karanjia[1]

New Delhi
9 January 1947

My dear Karanjia,[2]

Various statements have appeared in the *Blitz* recently which have disturbed and distressed me somewhat. Some of them have no basis in fact such as the statement that Keskar is going to be appointed Ambassador

1. J.N. Collection.
2. (b. 1912); started *Blitz*, 1941; at present Editor-in-Chief, Blitz Publications Limited; editor of *The Mind of Mr. Nehru* (1960) and *The Philosophy of Mr. Nehru* (1966).

AT LANDI KOTAL, N.W.F.P., OCTOBER 1946

WITH FOREIGN SCIENTISTS, JANUARY 1947

in France. Others are so exaggerated and highly coloured that they produce a wrong picture. Yet others indulge in personalities so much that they do injury to the great cause for which you and many of us stand.

Much has been said in the *Blitz* recently about conflicts within the Congress and about differences between Sardar Patel and me. There has been an attack on Gandhiji also or what he stands for. It is well known that my views in regard to many matters are not the same as those of Gandhiji or Sardar Patel. Nevertheless the statements made in the *Blitz* and the inferences drawn are very far from the mark. And I was pained to read them.

I am writing to you to draw your attention to this because I feel that sensationalism is not good for the press or the public.

I might inform you that the Nawab of Bhopal has written to me denying the truth of the report about him which appeared in the recent number of *Blitz*.[3]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *ante*, p. 270, fn. 2.

64. Message to the People of the Soviet Union[1]

The greetings of writers and scientists of the Soviet Union on India's Independence Day are very welcome. Recently we have had the visit of four Russian scientists to the Indian Science Congress.[2] This was the first occasion when a scientific delegation from the Soviet Union came to India. Their very presence was welcomed as symbolizing a new approach to Indo-Soviet relations. They carried with them the good wishes of the writers and scientists of the Soviet Union for India and Indian science and they will carry back with them, I hope, the good wishes of the Indian people for the people of the Soviet Union.

It is inevitable that a free India should develop friendly relations in cultural and other matters with the people of the Soviet Union. If there is no other compulsion, there is the compulsion of geography and our being neighbours. But there are many other reasons also, for we have much to learn from them.

1. New Delhi, 12 January 1947. J.N. Collection. This message was sent to the General Secretary of the All-India Friends of the Soviet Union, Bombay.
2. See *ante*, section 7, item 6.

Our independence threatens no one and no country. An independent India will seek friendship everywhere and will strive for peace and freedom of the world. Today the Soviet Union, by virtue of its great position in the world, bears a tremendous responsibility for world peace. India will always work with all nations seeking peace and freedom. On the occasion of Independence Day I send my greetings to the people of the Soviet Union and convey to them our earnest desire for friendship and closer cooperation.

65. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
13.1.1947

My dear Krishna,

I am writing in somewhat of a hurry as I want this letter to be taken by Ratan Nehru who is leaving soon. I am sorry I have not written to you for a long time. I have never been quite so desperately busy as during the past fortnight. Apart from a continuing crisis in our Cabinet and in our relations with the Viceroy etc. we have had the Science Congress,[2] the A.I.C.C.,[3] Aung San's visit, the Princes and a host of other matters.

The Science Congress took up a lot of my time and was on the whole a success. The foreign scientists were I think sufficiently impressed. The Russians were pleased. They are now touring various places and will come back by the 20th and leave soon after for Russia.

You have written at some length about your visit to the Russian Ambassador in Washington and you were evidently distressed at various developments.[4] I do not think there is much room for you to be distressed and in any event it does not help to worry about past events. I have tried to explain to you the background of events here. We cannot forget it and ultimately this is the deciding factor. I wish you had not pressed the matter of an invitation being sent to me from the Soviet Union. A hint had been

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The thirty-fourth annual session of the Indian Science Congress was held at Delhi from 3 to 8 January 1947 with Nehru as its general president. See *ante*, section 6.
3. The A.I.C.C. met in New Delhi on 5 and 6 January to consider the British Government's statement of 6 December 1946. See *ante*, section 1, items 17 and 18.
4. Krishna Menon had written to Nehru on 25 December 1946 about his talks with the Russian ambassador in Washington with regard to the question of K.P.S. Menon going to Moscow and a possible visit by Nehru to Russia.

given and this is enough. To say more is to put ourselves and the other party in a false position. I am not at all sure that I can go to Russia because of happenings here. We cannot make ourselves too cheap or too eager. I want to go but this will necessarily depend on many developments.

As things are, I do not want you to raise the question of your visiting Poland and the other countries you mention. If I bring this up it will become a major issue for the Cabinet and there will be a great deal of opposition. We can see to this later.

As you are now functioning on behalf of the Government of India in regard to the visits to various European capitals, it is not desirable for any emphasis being laid on your being my personal representative.

Yesterday I had a visit from the French Consul General[5] who conveyed a message from his Government that they wanted to have a kind of special mission in Delhi—something in the nature of a legation but not quite that—a provisional arrangement which might later develop into an embassy. This unusual procedure he stated was necessitated because of the provisional nature of our Interim Government here. He suggested that we might send a similar mission to Paris. I do not like this idea but for the present we have asked him to give his proposal in writing. We shall keep you informed so that you may know what we are doing in case you are going to Paris soon.

About the Independence Day meeting[6] I think you should participate but it would be desirable for you not to deliver the principal speech or to say anything about the present situation. As a matter of fact we are having no speeches or public demonstrations here on this occasion, though we are celebrating the day with all solemnity otherwise.

This letter must go now.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

5. Christian Fouchet (1911-1974); First Secretary, Moscow, 1944; Consul-General, India, 1945-47; Member of Parliament, 1951-55; Ambassador to Denmark, 1958-62; High Commissioner, Algeria, March-July 1962; Minister of Information, September-December 1962, of Education, 1962-67, of Interior, 1967-68.
6. The Independence Day meeting, held at Holborn Hall, London, on 26 January 1947, was attended by Indians, Indonesians, Indo-Chinese, Arabs, Malays and representatives of several European countries. Harold Laski also addressed the meeting.

66. Air Services Agreement with France[1]

The proposal of the French Government[2] raises important issues, more especially now when hostilities are in progress in Indo-China. Public opinion in India is very much against the use of force by the French Government against the people of Indo-China and anything which we do to facilitate the use of this force is bound to be resented and vigorously criticised. Apart from the general question, therefore, the present moment is least propitious for raising this issue. It would not be proper to arrive at any such agreement without reference to public opinion. It will certainly be a matter for the Cabinet to consider.

Any proposal, therefore, for a long-term agreement must be ruled out. Defence Department's view that we could gain something valuable in exchange for this in the shape of permission for R.A.F. squadrons to fly from the U.K. across France to India is not very helpful. It is said that this would be a great advantage, in case India were attacked. There is no question of India being attacked; nor is any such question likely to arise for a considerable time. I think it is a little dangerous to shape our present policy on this basis. At present the question is how soon British military forces and air formations in India can leave India. There is no question of further additions to them being made. To consider this question in terms of more R.A.F. squadrons coming from the U.K. to India is to think as if India is likely to remain weak and incapable of defence in the future without the help of the R.A.F. The whole question really has to be considered from the point of view of defence policy and the rapid nationalisation of the Indian defence services. This consideration, therefore, should be ruled out.

The present arrangement appears to provide for the maximum frequency of one military aircraft per week to pass over India in each direction. Presumably, this is meant for official passengers. This arrangement may continue. I do not think any long period should be fixed for this owing to the possibility of developments in Indo-China. In no event must we appear to be aiding the French in their hostilities against the people of Indo-China.

1. Note to H. Weightman, 13 January 1947. External Affairs Department File No. 8(4)-EUR/47, pp. 27-28/n., National Archives of India.
2. The French Government wanted extension for ten years of the agreement of October 1945 permitting military air ferries across India.

I suggest, therefore, that the present arrangement be continued for six months and be reviewed then. At the same time it should be made clear that we are not agreeable to the passage across India of military aircraft which might be used for bombing or other war purposes.

I agree, therefore, to (a) and (b) of Mr. Weightman's note above. As for (c) I suggest that the period should be six months for the present.[3]

3. The office had suggested that India might agree to the draft agreement on the clear understanding "(a) that it provided for a maximum frequency of one military aircraft per week in each direction over India...(b) that passengers other than non-fare paying official passengers will not be carried; and (c) that the term of the agreement be limited...to two years".

67. Visas to Russians[1]

I agree[2] that it is absurd to refuse visas to Russians merely because they are Russians, more especially members of diplomatic staff, when we are on the point of exchanging diplomatic representatives. I do not quite see how we can single out the Military Attache for different treatment. But we would naturally make it clear that we expect reciprocity in all such matters.

1. Note, 13 January 1947. External Affairs Department File No. 3-P/47, p. 1/notes, National Archives of India.
2. Weightman, in his note of 8 January 1947, had said that there was no question of refusing diplomatic visas to Russian diplomats coming from Kabul except in cases of military attaches. But if Russians pursued this point, India would expect reciprocity of treatment.

68. To Nirmal Kumar Bose[1]

New Delhi
15 January, 1947

My dear Nirmal Babu,[2]
I have your letter of the 9th.[3] I have given considerable attention to the problem of Polish refugees in India. They are an extraordinarily difficult lot to deal with and we are at our wit's end. Nobody is harming them or injuring them, and yet they continue complaining and shouting. They are afraid of being sent back to Poland. We are not forcing them to go there. Obviously they cannot continue indefinitely in India. In any event we are not taking any step at all against their wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. (1901-1972); anthropologist; took part in the freedom movement; Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, 1946-47; Director, Anthropological Survey of India, and Adviser to the Government of India on Tribal Affairs, 1959-64; Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1967-70; author of several books including *My Days with Gandhi*.
3. Mahatma Gandhi, on the suggestion of his Polish disciple, Uma Devi, had enquired if something could be done to help Polish refugees in India.

69. To George Catlett Marshall[1]

15th January 1947

My dear General Marshall,[2]
I have just received the letter of the Acting Secretary of State[3] of the 14th December in which he informed me of Mr. George Brownell's generous

1. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 486-F.E.A./46, p. 346/c., National Archives of India.
2. (1880-1959); Chief of Staff of United States Army, 1939-45; Special Representative of the President to China, 1945-47; Secretary of State, 1947-49; Secretary of Defence, 1950-51; awarded Nobel Peace Prize, 1953.
3. Dean Acheson.

observations[4] in regard to the negotiation of the air agreement in Delhi.[5] I am grateful to the United States Government and to him for the appreciation which they have shown and in return I wish to express my own appreciation of the qualities of Mr. Brownell, both in the negotiation of this agreement and in his understanding of the problems of this Government. We too regard the conclusion of the air agreement as an important landmark in the relations between our countries. We have no doubt that it will be followed by many other agreements of mutual advantage both to the United States and India and regard it as an important step in the development of cordial and intimate relations between our countries.

2. May I take this opportunity of sending my congratulations to you on your appointment to your present high office.[6]

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Acheson in his letter of 14 December 1946 had written about Brownell's appreciation of sympathetic understanding and interesting conversations with Nehru and officials of the Government of India.
5. An air transport agreement between India and the U.S.A. was signed in New Delhi on 14 November 1946.
6. Marshall's appointment as U.S. Secretary of State was announced on 7 January 1947.

70. To R.K. Karanjia[1]

New Delhi
18 January 1947

My dear Karanjia,
I have just received your letter of the 15th January and I have read it with interest.[2] I am afraid I cannot write at length and discuss the various matters

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Karanjia had written about the appointment of Krishna Menon as Nehru's representative abroad and said that the Indian delegation's stand at U.N.O. had been critical of the U.S. and friendly to the Soviet Union. He referred also to Nehru's offer to resign after his visit to London, Asaf Ali's appointment as ambassador to U.S.A., and the urgent necessity of Nehru visiting Russia.

you have touched upon. Perhaps when I meet you we can have a talk about them. For the moment I shall only say that even if there is a basis for some item of news it is usually greatly distorted when it passes through various stages. There is truth in much that you say and yet there is also a great deal of exaggeration, at any rate, so far as my colleagues in the Congress are concerned. It may be perfectly true that some journalists whom you mention want to carry on some kind of a campaign against me. For my part it does not worry me in the least. I do not think it injures me at all; and anyway I cannot change my way of dealing with such matters because some people misbehave. You will appreciate the truth when exaggerated rebounds upon itself and even its factual content is not then believed. We have to be on our guard in criticising others lest we lend ourselves to criticism. That is playing into the other person's hand.

As for your reference to a feeling of frustration about recent events, it is true that much is happening which is distressing. We are facing a very complicated situation and it is not easy to deal with it in a simple agitational way though that has its value. It is difficult to explain all this briefly, but I want to tell you that in whatever I have done or am doing I have not changed in the least in regard to my fundamental principles and objectives.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

71. To Sultan Shahrir[1]

New Delhi
18th January 1947

My dear Dr. Shahrir,

I have just received your letter from Djakarta, dated the 9th December.[2] I can very well understand your many preoccupations and how difficult it must be for you to write long letters. You and your colleagues have heavy

1. File No. 207(III)-PS/47-PMS.
2. Shahrir wrote that the Dutch had been intransigent, during the negotiations, in conceding "formal external sovereignty" to the Indonesian Republic and that "the utmost we could fix was that the Republic could. . .have its *de facto* international relations." He expected a hard struggle during the next two years "to strengthen or even to maintain our position", and sought India's assistance.

burdens to carry and I do not want to add to them. During recent months, especially, you have had to negotiate with the Dutch Government and I know from my personal experience how difficult and exhausting such negotiations are.

Your letter has given me some insight into the present position in Indonesia. That position, as you say, is a delicate one and the balance may be upset by any untoward happening. I think, if I may say so, that you have been perfectly right in the course you have adopted. If you establish your freedom in reality the formal question of sovereignty can be decided without much difficulty. You will certainly have all the goodwill and help that we can give you.

I have frequently thought as to what we can do to help you. The normal course would have been for your Republic to be formally recognised by our Government and for us to exchange accredited representatives.[3] In this matter we have sounded the British Government also, but they have suggested that we might wait till the situation develops a little more. I think they realise that we will have to exchange diplomatic representatives, but they do not wish to encourage any action at present which would put them in a false position with the Dutch Government. Hence their desire to postpone any action. We did not think it worthwhile to press the issue at this stage. This would not help you much and would add one more problem for us. So, we shall await developments before taking any formal action. Meanwhile, you can rest assured that, formality apart, we wish to deal with you and want you to deal with us, on a free and equal basis.

The Inter-Asian Relations Conference is going to be held in New Delhi in the last week in March. We are likely to have a very representative gathering and we are looking forward to that occasion to meet you and such of your colleagues as can come over. Perhaps, by that time the situation will be clear and we can talk about our future relations.

The food situation in India continues to be critical and I fear it will not improve much for a considerable time to come. I hope in this matter we shall have your full assistance.

Here in India the situation continues to be a complicated one and it is a little difficult for me to explain or describe it in the course of a brief letter. We are trying our utmost to gain the cooperation of the Muslim League in the task of constitution-making. Unhappily, difficulties are being raised. You will realise that considerable confusion is produced where two major issues rise at the same time. We have the major question of India and England, and at the same time, we have the equally important question of establishing internal equilibrium between various forces. In addition, India,

3. Shahrir had proposed an exchange of representatives on an equal basis, pending a formal recognition of the Indonesian Republic by the Government of India.

like many other countries, has to face economic problems of vital importance. All these issues and problems pursue us at the same time; yet, I feel sure in my mind that we are going ahead and that there will be substantial results before long. Great forces are at work which are bigger than any individual or group. India today is a dynamic country with vast potentialities and such a country cannot be kept back for long from realising her destiny.

I would be grateful to you if you could help me in tracing a young Indian officer about whom we have had no news for a long time. His father is naturally very greatly distressed. This young Indian officer's name is Inderjit Singh. I enclose a letter from the father to me which gives all the facts. In case Inderjit Singh can be traced, or any news about him obtained, I shall be obliged if you will kindly communicate it to our Agent in Batavia who will telegraph it to us.

In this connection I should also like to know the present position of the Indian officers and men of the Indian army which apparently joined your forces. I understand that there are some hundreds of them with you still. Naturally, neither we nor you desire that anything untoward should happen to them. I saw a message somewhere that you had refused to hand them over to the Dutch authorities. I am glad you did so. I think in that matter you should deal directly with the Government of India. Perhaps the most suitable time to do so will be when your own position has been fully established and you are dealing directly with us through official channels.

With all good wishes to you,

Merdeka.

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

72. To I.R. Soekarno[1]

New Delhi
18th January 1947

Dear President Soekarno,

Some weeks ago an Indian merchant of Java, Mr. Kundan Thakurdas,[2] came to see me and he gave me news of conditions in Indonesia. He expressed a wish to take some books about India for you. We would gladly

1. File No. 207(III)-PS/47-PMS.
2. The Interim Government's envoy at Batavia.

send you books on India or other subjects, but unfortunately we could not make a good selection at the time. A few books were sent you and I hope you have received them.

I think it is very desirable for suitable libraries to be opened which could exchange books in this way and I hope we shall be able to develop some system of doing so. Meanwhile, both you and we have big problems to face. I hope the time will come soon when we can exchange official diplomatic representatives and it will be easier then to maintain regular contact.

We are following with great interest the developments in Indonesia. We hope that the provisional agreement which you have arrived at with the Dutch,[3] according to which the *de facto* authority of the Republic is recognised, will lead to formal recognition of the sovereignty of the Republic. In any event, the *de facto* recognition itself should lead to complete freedom of action on your part.

We in India have to face difficult problems and carry heavy burdens, and yet I feel sure that we are marching ahead to the full independence of India.

If there is anything we can do for you I hope you will not hesitate to inform us of it.

With all good wishes to you,

Merdeka.

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. A draft agreement signed by the representatives of the Dutch and the Republicans at Linggadjati on 15 November 1946 recognised the *de facto* authority of the Republic of Indonesia in Java, Madura and Sumatra. It also envisaged the formation of a United States of Indonesia before 1 January 1949 as a sovereign state comprising the Republic, Borneo and the Great Eastern State and of the establishment of a Netherlands-Indonesian Union.

73. The Palestine Conference[1]

New Delhi
19 January 1947

Our good wishes to you for the Palestine Conference.[2] India has followed with full sympathy the struggle of Arabs for freedom and to prevent any imposition upon them. There can be no settlement of the question of Palestine without the agreement and goodwill of the Arabs. We earnestly trust that it will be possible for all the people of Palestine to arrive at an agreement without the intervention of any external authority. In any event you will have our good wishes.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Telegram to Abdur Rahman. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
   Abdur Rahman (1888-1962); Advocate, Lahore High Court; Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University, 1930-34; Judge, Madras High Court, 1937-1943; Judge, Punjab High Court, 1943; Vice-Chancellor, Punjab University, 1943-47; India's Delegate to U.N. Special Committee on Palestine; wrote the leading minority report dissenting from the majority recommendation for the partition of Palestine; in Pakistan, served as Judge of the Punjab High Court and Vice-Chancellor, Punjab University; later Judge of the Pakistan Federal Court.
2. The London Conference on Palestine, postponed in October 1946, was resumed on 27 January 1947 and continued till 14 February. The Jewish Agency was again not represented, but the Palestinian Arabs, who had declined to attend its opening in 1946, sent representatives. The Arab Higher Executive Committee however made it clear that Palestinian Arabs were resolutely opposed to partition in any form and at any price.

74 On Dulles' Criticism of Indian Foreign Policy[1]

I have read with surprise and regret a report of a speech made by Mr. John Foster Dulles[2] in New York in which he criticises the policy of the Interim

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 20 January 1947. *The Hindu*, 21 January 1947.
2. (1888-1959); U.S. delegate to the General Assembly of the U.N.O., 1946-48 and 1950; Senator from New York, 1949; Special Representative of the President, 1950-51; Secretary of State, 1953-59; Special Consultant to the President, 1959.

Government.[3] I can hardly believe that the report is a correct one. Mr. Dulles was one of the representatives of the U.S. Government in the United Nations General Assembly and his words, therefore, carry weight. His reported description of the Interim Government and its policy shows lack of knowledge of facts and want of appreciation of the policy we are pursuing. I do not wish to say more at this stage except to repeat that our policy is to cultivate friendly and cooperative relations with all countries, notably the U.S.A., and not to align ourselves with any particular Power grouping. Our policy is going to be an independent one based on the furtherance of peace and freedom everywhere on the lines laid down by the United Nations Charter.

3. Dulles, addressing the National Publishers Association on 17 January 1947, had alleged that Soviet communism exercised a strong influence on India through the Interim Government.

75. To Sultan Shahrir[1]

New Delhi
21st January 1947

Dear Dr. Shahrir,
A deputation from the Netherlands Government has come here to negotiate an agreement regarding Dutch air lines flying over India to Indonesia. Previous to the war we had an agreement with them. This lapsed during the war and now they want a fresh agreement on a new basis. We have recently concluded an agreement with the United States of America and this is likely to be the basis of all future agreements. I do not think we shall have any great difficulty in agreeing about technical and like matters. Naturally the agreement will give equal rights to both the parties concerned, that is to say it will be open to us to have air services on a reciprocal footing.

The question, however, arises as to what the views of your Government are in regard to this matter. Naturally we should not like to do anything of which you disapprove. We cannot formally refer this matter to you for reasons which you will appreciate. I am, however, informing you of these developments.

I take it that for some time to come the Indonesian Republic will not be in a position to start any air services of its own, and it has no objection to a Dutch air line going over India to Indonesia. This will in fact facilitate

1. File No. 207(III)-PS/47-PMS.

intercourse between India and Indonesia. Possibly in the course of the next year or two an Indian air line may also go to Indonesia.

I had an interview with the Dutch Delegation today and I pointed out to them that the Indonesian Republic, being in *de facto* control of large territories in Indonesia, their concurrence was desirable. They said that ultimately this would certainly be essential and that they would have the right then to ratify this agreement or reject it. For the present they seemed to think this was not necessary although they recognised the implications of what I said.

This matter will be discussed more fully now between our representatives and the Dutch representatives. We shall try our best to safeguard your interests.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

76. India and Malaya[1]

India's long history has few more fascinating chapters than those relating to her missions and adventures in South-East Asia. Unfortunately even now few people know much about these colonising expeditions and the wonderful flowering of Indian art and culture that they brought about over these eastern regions. Even now the student of Indian art must go to this further India to find some of the finest specimens of it.

I welcome this little book of pictures showing the connection of India and Malaya through the ages. I hope it will lead to further study of India's connection not only with Malaya but with the other countries of South-East Asia during past ages. I hope also that this study will lead to an understanding of the present and to a growth of closer relations between these countries and India.

1. New Delhi, 22 January 1947. Foreword to *India and Malaya through the Ages* by S. Durai Raja Singam.

77. The Need to Avoid Power Politics[1]

I had hoped that I would have the opportunity of long talks with Asaf Ali and K.P.S. Menon before they left India to take charge of their duties abroad. I still hope to do so. But there has been such an accumulation of work and engagements that it is a little difficult to find enough time. I am therefore jotting down some odd facts in my mind. This is not supposed to be a full note in any sense.

2. It is obvious that our Ambassadors must keep up to a certain standard and must have, if not to begin with then a little later, all the staff that they need and that is customary. We need not follow such customs slavishly, partly because we cannot always afford to do so and partly because it does not follow that an old custom is necessarily good or suitable to us. We cannot obviously seek to rival other embassies in pomp and show. Nor has it been our habit to try to show off. We might indeed be more effective and distinguished by adopting somewhat simpler ways. Our Ambassadors will represent a great country and it is right that they should make others feel that they should do so. But they should also represent a poor country where millions live on the verge of starvation. They cannot forget this nor indeed should they do anything which seems in violent conflict with it.

3. We are new to this business of sending Ambassadors. We have no traditions or rules to govern us. To some extent we shall be guided of course by the usual rules and procedures which obtain in other embassies. But there is no reason why we should consider ourselves bound by them completely. Where considered necessary we can strike out a new line, provided this is not unbecoming or indecorous.

4. Many rather petty questions will arise for decision such as the question of a flag, of a crest, of ambassadorial dress etc. There are no adequate answers for these questions at present. Gradually answers will be found. Meanwhile it is as well to recognise that we have no official National Flag. It is not proper to use any other flag. Therefore the use of a flag should be avoided. If on any particular occasion this seems essential, and I do not see why this should be so, the Ambassador should rely on his own discretion in the matter. No special crest need be used. As for dress, probably the most suitable dress on official occasions would be a black *sherwani*.

1. New Delhi, 22 January 1947. Note for Asaf Ali and K.P.S. Menon, ambassadors-designate to U.S.A. and China respectively. K.P.S. Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

5. In view of our somewhat indeterminate position, as we are not fully independent yet, certain difficulties might arise. We should function, however, as an independent nation in our foreign relations. There should be friendly relations with the British embassies but care should be taken that we do not become an appendage or a junior partner of such embassy. This is necessary as there might be a tendency on the part of the British embassy to treat us as such. All our dealings with foreign offices abroad will of course be direct and without any intervention of the British embassy. Wherever necessary full information can be sent to the British embassy.

6. It is sometimes customary for British embassies to hold periodical meetings of representatives of the Commonwealth countries. It is not necessary to avoid them, nor is it necessary to function as regular members of such a group. Friendly relations should be maintained with all these countries but care should be taken to avoid the semblance of membership of that group.

7. Our Ambassadors will of course function in accordance with the instructions sent to them from time to time and in accordance with our general policy. They must avoid any public expression of opinion which might prove embarrassing or distasteful to the Government or people of the country where they serve. They should avoid on the other hand any exuberance of spirit in praising any policy of those countries which are at all controversial.

8. Our general policy, as has been often stated, is to avoid entanglement in power politics and not to join any group of Powers as against any other group. The two leading groups today are the Russian bloc and the Anglo-American bloc. We must be friendly to both and yet not join either. Both America and Russia are extraordinarily suspicious of each other as well as of other countries. This makes our path difficult and we may well be suspected by each of leaning towards the other. This cannot be helped.

9. Our foreign policy will ultimately be governed by our internal policy. That policy is far from being communistic and is certainly opposed to the Communist Party in India. Nevertheless there is a great and growing feeling in India in favour of some kind of a vague socialist order of society. There is much goodwill for America and expectation of help from her in many fields, especially technical. There is also a great deal of sympathy for the work of the Soviet Union and the remarkable change that this has brought about among the people. The Soviet Union being our neighbour, we shall inevitably develop closer relations with it. We cannot afford to antagonise Russia merely because we think that this may irritate someone else. Nor indeed can we antagonise the U.S.A.

10. In the U.S.A. there is the negro problem. Our sympathies are entirely with the negroes. There is no reason to hide this because that is our basic policy. But any conduct which might entangle us or raise difficulties should be avoided.

11. Our Ambassadors should meet, whenever they have the chance, prominent African leaders. They should not go to any political functions organised by them which may prove embarrassing.

12. In China the situation is still more difficult because of the civil war that is going on. I have been on very friendly terms with the Chiang Kai-sheks and we hold each other in esteem. I have been friendly also with some of the prominent Communist leaders of the North-West, though I have not met them. It would appear even from the American reports that neither party in the Chinese dispute is free from blame. If American statesmen say so in spite of their violent dislike to everything communistic, then it seems clear that the Chinese Communists have no bad case.

13. Our Ambassador in China, while maintaining close and friendly relations with Chiang Kai-shek's Government, should not allow himself to become a partisan in the civil conflict. Nor should he say anything disparaging to either side. Some words I have used or written have been exploited by the Chinese Government as against the North-West Communist Government. I have regretted this. If our Ambassador in China has any opportunity, without causing ill will to the Chinese Government, to visit the North-West areas he should seize it and explain to the leaders there our general policy of friendship and noninterference.

14. Our representatives abroad and their staff should always remember that they have to function as Indians and not as imitations of Englishmen. Any attempt on the part of any member of the staff to behave pompously as if he is very much Anglicized should be sternly discouraged.

15. It is my desire to visit both China and Russia in the course of the year. But it is difficult for me to find the time. Perhaps I may be able to manage it in this summer.

78. Air Agreement with the Netherlands[1]

I agree generally with the above notes and the draft.[2] I would have liked a mention in it of the desirability of an Indonesian representative being present during the air service negotiations in Delhi. I spoke to H.M. Communications and he told me that he had insisted on this. The file may be sent to him. If the presence of the Indonesian representative involves delay I would be agreeable to the course suggested in the draft. This would protect Indonesian interests. Meanwhile technical discussions can proceed.

1. Note, 22 January 1947. External Affairs Department File No. 11-Eur./47, pp. 17-19/ notes, National Archives of India.
2. In regard to the proposed air agreement between India and the Netherlands Government it had been suggested that the Netherlands Government should be asked to state that the Indonesian Republic would not object to the conclusion of such an agreement; but it would be preferable if an Indonesian representative could be present during the negotiations and at the signing of the agreement.

79. Publicity in the United States[1]

I

I have read the notes prepared by Azim Husain on publicity in U.S.A. and the organizations there of interest to India. These notes are interesting and helpful in understanding the situation. There can be no doubt that proper publicity in the U.S.A. must receive immediate attention. Azim Husain has suggested various methods of tackling this problem. They are all good. But his list of various suggested activities, all desirable but nevertheless not easily feasible to begin with at least, does not seem to me wholly practical. Any attempt to organise a large number of such activities will meet with considerable difficulty and might lead to ineffectiveness. I think that the most important activities should be chosen and properly organised.

2. The first thing to do is to put an end to Indian publicity through the British Embassy. This publicity has been very objectionable during the past few years. It surprises me that it has continued till now. The British Embassy or any other British office in the U.S.A. has no business to undertake any kind of Indian publicity. The British Ambassador's attention should be drawn to this.

1. Note, 27 January 1947. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

3. Publicity will have to be organised both in Washington and New York. It is obvious that persons associated with the past forms of publicity are totally unsuited for work now, even apart from their competence. They have been tied up far too much with wrong and objectionable methods of publicity and it is hardly possible to expect them to change their outlook or their methods. Azim Husain suggests that either an American publicity expert be employed or a suitable Indian resident in the U.S.A. I think that the employment of an American publicity expert is undesirable, though advice and help may be taken from such experts. It is suggested that there is a suitable Indian available and I understand that this refers to Dr. Anup Singh.[2] Dr. Anup Singh is undoubtedly able and qualified for this kind of work.

4. I would suggest that the first step should be the appointment of a suitable Public Relations Officer. Other steps would follow in consultation with him. Azim Husain has suggested what he should do. The suggestions are worth consideration though perhaps all of them may not be feasible at present. The publication of *Indian Nation* as it is done today is of no value. Something more up-to-date and attractive should be issued.

5. It seems to me that the best kind of publicity, especially in the U.S.A., should relate to the constructive activities of the Central and Provincial Governments in India, such as our big projects for constructing dams, reservoirs, hydro-electric works, irrigation schemes, health schemes, education, improvement of labour conditions and the like. These will interest Americans and will make them think of what India is trying to achieve. It is not necessary to deal much with the so-called communal problem in India except sometimes to give the correct facts. In all our publicity, emphasis should not be laid on internal and domestic conflicts but rather on the constructive side of our work. The approach should be a non-party one and there should not be condemnation of any group or party. Even when communal propaganda is indulged in by any group or individual, our answer to it should not take the shape of an argument with them, but should give correct facts so as to make people look at the problem in true perspective.

6. The question of continuing some of the existing Indian or Indo-American organisations has been considered. It is difficult to give any advice at this end. It seems to me desirable that non-official organizations, either purely Indian or Indo-American or both, should exist. Any such organization cannot expect any official help from the Government, though various facilities might be given to it. I doubt if financial help from non-official

2. India's first Public Relations Officer at Washington, 1947-48.

sources in India will be forthcoming in any large measure, though some little help might be obtained. Such organizations must, therefore, depend largely on their own resources.

7. It seems to me quite wrong to say or imagine that because the Interim Government has come into existence in India there is no longer any need for non-official organizations in the U.S.A. or anywhere else. There is definitely a need for them and even when India is completely independent there may be still need for them. What form or shape this should take is another matter and can be judged only on the spot.

8. It seems probable that the National Committee for India's Freedom may find it difficult to continue as an effective organization.[3] The India League appears to be a stronger body. It is possible that the India League may split up on the question of Palestine or some other question over which American opinion is strongly divided. That is a matter concerning American domestic politics. However this may be, India's policy on such issues cannot be determined because of its reactions on some Americans; so also its policy in regard to the U.S.S.R. The fact that some prominent members of the India League disapproved of the association of the Indian delegation with the Soviet delegation at the United Nations seems to indicate that these Americans want India to keep away as far as possible from the Soviet. No Indian foreign policy, which is at all realistic, can think in these terms. This has nothing to do with communism or even with approval or disapproval of Russia. It is essential that India should develop closer relations with Russia which is not only one of the two biggest Powers in the world today, but which is also a neighbour of India. Not to develop these relations itself would mean our not being neutral in the power politics of today. Our policy definitely is to keep away from entangling alliances with either of the two main blocs of Powers and to cultivate friendly relations with both.

9. Our general approach must inevitably be as friendly as possible to the U.S.A., their Government and people. Nevertheless, it should be made perfectly clear that India has a mind and a will of her own and she does not welcome any patronage or imposition from any quarter. We can only deal with other countries on an equal basis, and if this is denied to us, we shall

3. After the First World War, the India League, set up in New York with Haridas T. Mazumdar as Secretary, organised protest meetings against British repressive policies in India. During the Second World War the National Committee for India's independence, with Syed Hossain as President, was formed at Washington, to represent India's cause. *The Voice of India*, a monthly published by the National Committee, made India's freedom one of the war aims.

rely upon our own resources however poor they might be. Every country thinks of its own interest in relation to foreign policy. India will do likewise, though at the same time there is a strong idealistic trend in her outlook on world affairs. The natural reaction in India to a friendly approach from another country will be a friendly and cooperative one. If the approach is not friendly, the reaction also will not be friendly.

10. While India's present position with her rapid advance towards complete freedom and industrial growth has to be emphasised, her potential power must always be kept in view. In the long range it is this that counts in foreign policy, and every far-seeing statesman bases his policy accordingly.

11. It is difficult to say what India can afford for her publicity offices abroad, more especially in the U.S.A. There are obvious difficulties to be faced in India at present. Nevertheless, every effort will be made to have a proper and efficient publicity agency in the U.S.A. Even if this is not very widespread to begin with, its foundations should be strong and secure on which a super-structure can be built later.

12. An effort should be made to make Indians in U.S.A. to cooperate together in political as well as cultural activities. It is unbecoming for Indians abroad to indulge in their domestic quarrels. Such an effort always raises a great deal of opposition, and in view of the communal situation, it is not likely to succeed wholly. Nevertheless, it should be undertaken and even some success is worthwhile.

13. The effectiveness of publicity work abroad will depend greatly on the work done by the Information Department in India and the close cooperation of this Department with publicity offices abroad.

II

I gave Azim Husain's report together with my note dated 18th January to Mrs. Pandit.[4] She has given me her reactions to these papers. It seems clear that Azim Husain was not fully informed about some matters.

2. From what I have seen myself of the various reports and press cuttings of Mrs. Pandit's visits to America in 1944-45 and in 1946 I have little doubt that her second visit created a bigger impression and gained far greater publicity. It is true at the same time that for various reasons the State Department as well as some others reacted very unfavourably to the Indian

4. See *ante*, section 10(I), item 26.

delegation's activities. This was probably chiefly because they thought that India was drawing closer to Russia. At the same time I think that in another section of the American people, including some of the newspapers, our delegation and especially Mrs. Pandit created a very favourable impression. There is no doubt that among the Asian countries the impression created by our delegation was entirely favourable and India emerged as a kind of a leader of Asia.

3. Many Americans, especially those in high office, appear to be obsessed by fear and are suffering from high nervous tension. They exhibit a strange combination of pride in their strength and apprehensiveness about the future as represented by Russia and communism. It is a little difficult to deal with people who are in this jittery state of nerves, just as it is difficult to deal with the Russians who, from long experience, suspect everybody. Each group thinks that any country that is not fully on its side is against it. Neutrals are suspected.

4. This results in a neutral country being suspected and disliked on either side. We have to take that risk. It would be wrong and foolish to give up a policy that we consider right in order to please or not to irritate some other country.

5. There is another approach to the problem. Are we thinking in terms of Governments only or of the people? It does make a difference whom we have in view. A brave and open policy may irritate some Governments but is often appreciated by large numbers of people. In the long run it is likely to tell. Any other policy would be purely opportunist and will have no substantial backing.

6. Ultimately our policy must be governed not only by our own interests but what our people think India's interests to be. This consideration has not probably influenced policy much in the past and we have thought too much in terms of the upper layers of government both in India and in other countries. We cannot afford to do that any longer.

80. India's Relations with Afghanistan[1]

I regret I am unable to agree to this proposal.[2] As there was some reference to it in the last month's E.A.D. summary which recently came up before the Cabinet, I drew attention of Members of the Cabinet to it. Considerable surprise was expressed that we should bear the burden not only of training but of salaries of foreign officers.[3] There is every desire to promote friendly relations between India and Afghanistan. But to do so in the manner suggested is distinctly odd. Whether this was justifiable or not last year, when the war had just recently ended, I do not know, though it is difficult for me to appreciate this kind of generosity. I do not know of any other instance where a country pays for the salary and training of officers from another country. Having accepted this once, it is quite natural that a similar request should be made again. I have no doubt that if we accede to this now the request would be repeated next year, and each time it will become more and more difficult to refuse it because a convention will be established. When ultimately we express our inability to accede to it, the Afghan Government will feel that they have been deprived of something which was their rightful due. The sooner, therefore, that we put an end to this business the better.

2. I have no doubt that this kind of generosity is liked by those who profit by it. But it is a risky business in the long run, apart from the financial burden involved which we can ill bear in view of the many demands upon us.

3. If we accept this principle in regard to Afghanistan, there is no particular reason why we should refuse it in the case of some other neighbouring country. Any differentiation in treatment will give rise to ill feeling. It is obvious that we cannot continue this process indefinitely. As soon as we stop it there will be dissatisfaction.

4. We should certainly offer all facilities for training in India of Afghan officers and N.C.O.s. We may even bear the cost of actual training etc. But to supplement the pay of the officers has no justification whatever and

1. Note, 28 January 1947. External Affairs Department File No. 9-IA/47, pp. 10-12/notes, National Archives of India.
2. The External Affairs Department had asked for Nehru's approval of the recommendation that the Government of India continue financial assistance to Afghan military trainees as they would promote friendly relations with Afghanistan.
3. Of the total expenditure of Rs. 3,37,240 incurred on the training of the first batch of Afghan officers, Rs. 2,73,240 was spent on supplementing their salary.

indeed is not very complimentary to the Afghan Government, though they may seek to profit by it.

5. It seems to me that our policy in regard to neighbouring countries is far too much based on payment of hard cash, or giving them certain privileges which cost us large sums of money. In Burma a policy jointly pursued by H.M.G. and the Burma Government is costing us a vast sum of money in the shape of absurdly high prices for rice export to India. India is thus supposed to help in the rehabilitation of Burma. When any question of making a fair bargain with Burma arises, we are told that this may adversely affect our relations with Burma.

6. So also with Afghanistan. It appears from the summary that the Government of India agreed in 1945 to assist the Afghans in the equipment of their armed forces by supplying a great deal of equipment at concession rates. The value of this aid is estimated to be Rs. 43 lakhs. This is a substantial sum and it is not clear to me at all why we should spend it in equipping the Afghan army. This question is, however, not before us at present. I suggest, therefore, that we should inform the Afghan Government that we shall gladly give them full facilities for training of officers and N.C.O.s and shall bear the cost of such training for the next year and without any commitment for future years; but we are unable to supplement the salaries of the officers as we did last year.

7. I am strengthened in this opinion by the views of my colleagues in the Cabinet.

81. Exchange of Embassies with France[1]

I agree to the summary and the draft telegram to the Secretary of State.[2]

1. Note, 29 January 1947. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 8(8)-EUR/47, pp. 6-7/notes, National Archives of India.
2. The summary for the Cabinet stated that the French Consul-General in Calcutta proposed on 29 January 1947 that full diplomatic representation at embassy level be exchanged between India and France. Earlier, on 11 January 1947, he had suggested establishment of provisional diplomatic missions.
   The draft telegram to the Secretary of State suggested that in spite of the events in Indo-China the French proposal to exchange embassies be accepted.

I met M. Fouchet today and impressed upon him that the events in Indo-China were having a very unfortunate effect on Indian opinion. I expressed the hope that some settlement will be reached soon.

A fact to be remembered is the help France gave us in the U.N. on the South African issue. In fact it was the Franco-Mexican resolution which was ultimately adopted.

82. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
29 January 1947

My dear Krishna,
I write to you after a long while. I have been busy of course, but the real reason, I suppose, is that there was nothing very pleasant to write about. So many things are happening which are exceedingly irritating. The position here continues as bad as ever or perhaps worse, with the result that all work suffers and tempers are frayed. There is the continuous tug of war within the Government itself and none too great harmony in the outlook of our own colleagues. The Congress organisation is also in a bad way in the sense that there is utter lack of discipline and everyone pulls in his own direction. I do not propose to write to you about all these matters but just to indicate to you that thus far there is no improvement at all.

2. The Constituent Assembly was on the whole successful. We proceed slowly but the beginnings have been fairly satisfactory. We have decided not to end the preliminary session and this has been adjourned to some date in April. What happens then will depend on whether the Muslim League comes in or not. In any event the sections will have to function after that session. How they will function again is entirely uncertain because of the indecision of the Muslim League. In any event the Assembly will go on.

3. The Rulers of the States and their Ministers have all gathered together in Delhi for various consultations in connection with their participation in the Constituent Assembly. The official group headed by the Nawab of Bhopal[2] and supported by the Political Department wants to keep away

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Hamidullah Khan (1894-1960); Chancellor, Muslim University, Aligarh, 1930-35; Chancellor, Chamber of Indian Princes, 1931-32 and 1944-47.

or at any rate to postpone coming in till they know what the Muslim League does. They are likely to propose conditions which we cannot accept. Some States, however, are prepared to come in direct. It is extraordinarily difficult to devise a satisfactory method for their representation as there is no proper machinery for election. We are going to meet the States Negotiating Committee on the 8th February.

4. The Legislative Assembly begins its budget session next Monday, February 3rd. This session will last till April and keep us frightfully busy.

5. The last week of March we are having the Inter-Asian Relations Conference which I expect you to attend. This Conference has attracted a great deal of attention and we are receiving inquiries about it from various Governments who seem to fear that this is an attempt to organise an Asian bloc. The response to our invitations has been very good and we expect a very representative gathering. The occasion may well be unique in Asia's history. As far as I can see, practically every Asian country will be represented, including Mongolia. What I am afraid of is that arrangements at our end may not be wholly satisfactory.

6. I have been receiving your cables about your visits to European capitals. I wrote to you about the French proposal. Your reaction to this was identical with ours and we informed the French Government accordingly through their Consul here. The result has been a sudden change in the French Government's attitude. Today the Consul General came to make fresh proposals—that we establish embassies as soon as possible. They are anxious to start within a few days with a Charge d'affaires. This proposal has to be accepted and we cannot possibly refuse it. There is, however, the Vietnam affair[3] which has roused a great deal of indignation in India and it is possible that our exchange of diplomatic relations with France at this stage may be criticised. Because of this we have decided to make this a Cabinet matter. Probably there will be a decision within a week. I anticipate this to be favourable to the proposal and an announcement will soon follow. This does not mean that we must send somebody to Paris immediately. We shall probably send a Charge d'affaires to begin with after a month or six weeks, and somewhat later an Ambassador. I made it quite clear to the French Consul that French policy in Indo-China was distressing us

3. Fighting had broken out between the French forces in Indo-China and the Vietnam Government in December 1946 after negotiations for reaching a final political settlement had broken down. Heavy troop reinforcements were sent by France in January to defeat the Nationalist forces.

greatly.[4] Perhaps one reason for the new anxiety of the French Government to establish relations with us is this very Vietnam affair. In spite of this, however, we cannot refuse the offer. That would be an insult to a major nation. We have to remember also that France stood by us on the South African issue at the U.N.

7. You have been doing very well during your missions to European capitals and we all appreciate the good work you have done. Our difficulty is how to follow that up because of lack of suitable persons. As you perhaps know, we have received a communication from the Dutch Government for exchange of diplomats.

8. Apart from the difficulty of finding suitable men for posts abroad, there is the difficulty of dealing with the Muslim League in this connection. They raise the communal issue at every step. The Viceroy's attitude also comes in the way. The result has been a hold up as I am not prepared to take any step which is likely to be overruled by the Viceroy. We are considering this matter carefully and will have to decide on our course of action soon.

9. The way the Viceroy and the Muslim League look upon these appointments is that there should be alternative appointments of Muslim Leaguers.

10. You have written to me repeatedly about the vast importance of the London High Commissionership. I think I have pointed out to you that at present this is under the Commerce Department, that is, under a Muslim League Member who does not relish at all giving up this opportunity for patronage. We have proposed, in furtherance of our old and new policy, to put the High Commissioner of London under the External Affairs Department. The Commerce Department objects and the matter will be brought up before the Cabinet. Meanwhile there is a possibility of a Muslim Leaguer being appointed over our heads. Every effort is being made to this end. If this happens you will have a shock and so will we.

11. One of the most distressing features of the situation is back-stairs gossip on a wide scale about internal Congress divisions even in the Interim Government. Some press people and others have gone rather out of their way to criticise me and point out my many failings. Other press men have defended me. Among my many sins are following a policy in the U.N. which has irritated the United States authorities as this policy was supposed

4. On 25 December 1946, Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, the French High Commissioner in Indo-China, announced that France did not intend to give the Indo-Chinese people total and unconditional independence.

to be pro-Soviet. My association with you is also brought into the picture, as you are supposed to be inclined towards the Soviet. It is stated that our attitude at the U.N. has resulted in a lack of cooperation between India and the U.S.A. in regard to obtaining machinery etc. for development.

12. I want to tell you that I am convinced you have acted perfectly correctly and I have no complaint on that score. But it is no easy matter to go about explaining all this to various people. It was because of this that I asked you to go a little slow in your approaches to European countries.

13. Naturally behind all this is a certain personal factor, but I cannot go into that question now.

14. Ali Yavar Jung[5] came to dinner here tonight and he was loud in his praises of you. You have evidently made an impression upon him as well as many others.

15. I am feeling frightfully sleepy now and so I shall not continue the letter. I hope, however, that you will bear all these conflicting currents and forces in mind in judging of the situation here. This is a most unsatisfactory letter but I am sending it as it is.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

5. (1905-1976); academician and diplomat; Vice-Chancellor, Osmania University, 1945-46 and 1948-52; delegate to the U.N. General Assembly, 1946, 1950, 1952-53, 1955, and leader of the Indian delegation to the U.N.O., 1956-57; Ambassador to Argentina, Yugoslavia and France; Ambassador in U.S.A., 1968-70; Governor of Maharashtra, 1970-76.

83. Cable to M.A. Rauf[1]

Burma White Paper definition of 'Burmese National' for purposes of Constituent Assembly.[2] While our chief contention that nationality must not depend on race alone has been accepted other conditions, that is to say, birth plus residence for eight years are very stiff. It is possible that this

1. New Delhi, 30 January 1947. Department of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 17-1/47-O.S. II, p. 6/corr., National Archives of India.
2. "...a British subject or the subject of an Indian State who was born in Burma and resided there for a total period of not less than eight years...."

restriction of Indian electorate will be enforced only for purposes of Constituent Assembly but it is feared that the precedent may be adopted for subsequent elections and normal citizenship rights as well. If Aung San available here on his return journey endeavour will be made to modify qualifications into birth or residence for less period and in any event present limitations must not be treated as precedent for determination of status of Indians in future.

2. These are tentative views. Grateful for your views, and rough estimates of numbers of Indians affected by proposed limitations.

Meanwhile no approach should of course be made by you to Burma Governor or any British official.

84. Negotiations with Russia[1]

There does not appear to be much difference between the 'formal agreement' as suggested and an exchange of letters containing much the same thing.[2] It is not necessary for Mr. K.P.S. Menon to suggest a 'formal agreement'. He should approach the Russian Ambassador in Nanking, in continuation of the previous talks in Paris and New York with M. Molotov, and propose that we might now exchange ambassadors. If the Russians want something more formal, as suggested, he can agree to it.

We shall undoubtedly want consulates in some places in the Soviet Union. This matter need not be raised at this stage, and certainly not as a condition precedent, but Mr. Menon might well mention it.[3]

H.M.G. should be informed of the steps we are taking and the necessary approval obtained as suggested in Mr. Weightman's note.

1. Note, 31 January 1947. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 20(4)-EUR/47, p. 54/notes, National Archives of India.
2. The point at issue was whether India should propose a formal agreement for the exchange of diplomatic representatives with Russia, or it would suffice for K.P.S. Menon to state this to his Russian colleague in Nanking and secure his reply accepting it.
3. Weightman had suggested that, as it was necessary for India to keep herself in touch with developments in Central Asia, K.P.S. Menon should make it known that India would wish to establish consulates in one or more of the Soviet Republics in Central Asia.

10

INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

III. The Paris Peace Conference

AT BANARAS, DECEMBER 1946

New Delhi

Confidential

Broadcast — September 7. 1946

Friends and comrades — Jai Hind!

Six days ago my colleagues and I sat on the chairs of high office in the Government of India. A new Government came into being in this ancient land, the Interim or Provisional Government we called it, the stepping stone to the full independence of India. Many thousands of messages of greeting and good wishes have come to me from all parts of the world and from every nook and corner of India. And yet we asked for no celebration of this historic event and even restrained our peoples' enthusiasm. For we wanted them to realise that we were yet on the march and the goal had still to be reached. There were many difficulties and obstacles on the way and our journey's end might not be so near as people thought. Any weakness now, any complacency would be fatal to our cause.

Our hearts were heavy also with the terrible tragedy of Calcutta and because of the insensate strife of brother against brother. The freedom we had envisaged for which we had laboured through generations of trial and suffering was for all the people of India, and not for one group or class or the followers of one religion. We aimed at a cooperative commonwealth in which all would be equal sharers in opportunity and in all the things that give meaning and value to life. Why then this strife,

1. The Future of the Former Italian Colonies[1]

I have read Major Fry's note of the 3rd September and Mr. Weightman's note of the 4th September.

It is a little difficult to grasp the significance of all the various amendments and proposals before the Peace Conference, especially on a first consideration of them.[2] It would appear that behind them lie power politics and a desire of one or the other Power or a group of Powers to strengthen their position. The first thing to be cleared is India's approach to all these questions. Thus far our approach has been largely governed by H.M.G.'s approach. In future, India's approach will be progressively her own in the international field. That does not mean, of course, that we should not cooperate with H.M.G. or the Commonwealth countries. We should endeavour to do so as far as possible, but we should not allow our own viewpoint or our own interests to suffer. That viewpoint should be:—

(1) The functioning of India in the international field as an independent entity.

(2) The support of the claims of freedom and independence by colonial and dependent territories.

(3) Support to every proposal which promotes the peace and security of the world.

(4) To some extent, inevitably, we must pay special regard to Asian countries and to those African territories and colonies which have suffered in the past so much from foreign control and exploitation.

It is manifest that at the present moment there is an unfortunate conflict between Great Powers and that each one of them is trying to strengthen itself in view of possible wars or other conflicts in future. India is primarily interested in her own security. That security is bound to be endangered by any war anywhere and therefore our policy must be to help in preventing any issue leading to war. At the same time, it is highly desirable that we

1. Note to H. Weightman, 4 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 10(9)-cc/46, pp. 15-18, National Archives of India.
2. It was announced on 21 August 1946 that over 250 amendments had been presented by the various delegations in respect of the five draft treaties, of which no less than 70 were presented by Australia alone. Many of these amendments suggested proposals for new frontiers, for rights of commerce in the ex-enemy countries, and for guarantees to minorities. There was also an Indian proposal that the Italian treaty should contain explicit assurances that the peoples of the former Italian colonies would be granted independence with the least possible delay.

should not commit ourselves to any particular policy of a Great Power which brings it into conflict with another Great Power. Thus, as far as possible, we should avoid taking sides in these international conflicts except when the issue is quite clear and it is to our interest to support any particular proposal. There is a tendency to blame the U.S.S.R. for its expansionist and obstructive policy. This blame may be partly justified as, in some ways, the U.S.S.R. appears to have come in the way of settlement of various issues. Nevertheless, the other Great Powers are not free from blame. There is no reason, therefore, why we should become satellites to any group or parties to any such dispute. Each subject should be considered on its own merits and not with a view to support this group or that group, avoiding always, as far as possible, conflict with any group.

In regard to the future of the ex-Italian colonies in Africa,[3] it is obvious that we should stand for the complete elimination of Italian sovereignty. The question is what should take its place. I think we must recognise the right to independence of all the countries involved, which includes their right to determine their own future. It is true that it is hardly possible to give effect to this in the immediate future and that some kind of interim period may have to be provided for. Nevertheless, the recognition of that independence, subject to an interim period and some safeguards, is of importance and should govern the whole consideration of the subject. We should oppose the establishment of any new colonial regime anywhere or any disguised colonies or mandates of the old League of Nations type. If any one Power is given anything in the nature of a mandate, howsoever framed, this will inevitably lead to a repetition of many of the evils of the colonial regime and will also lead to rivalry between the Powers. I feel, therefore, that no individual Power should be entrusted with this task. If once this process of a Great Power having dominating interest over a colonial area or a semi-colonial area is recognised, then there will be no end to it, and many territories will be involved in this process.

Thus we should proceed on the basis that sovereignty is inherent in the people of the territories involved and that they have a right to independence subject to the provisions of the United Nations Charter. Having recognized this, further steps will have to be in line with it. It should be laid down that all intermediate steps should lead rapidly to the establishment of this independence in accordance with the wishes of the people concerned. During the interim period, if the idea of an individual Power exercising trusteeship is rejected, then inevitably this trusteeship can only be exercised by the U.N.O. as a whole. This may seem to involve some difficulty, but probably every proposal involves difficulties. It is better, therefore, to have something which,

3. Libya, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland.

though difficult in application, at least avoids international rivalry and lessens the danger of exploitation of the country concerned by a dominating Power.

What the law may be about the United Nations assuming sovereignty of such areas, I do not know though *prima facie* I do not see why the law should be against it. What I suggest, however, is not that the United Nations should assume sovereignty, but that having recognised sovereignty of the people concerned, they should exercise it on their behalf for the interim period. Thus, Libya and Eritrea may be considered as independent countries temporarily under the trusteeship of the United Nations which should end after a stated number of years.

India would naturally be greatly interested in such collective trusteeship and would like to be a sharer in it, not only because of her own interests but also because, to some extent, dependent and colonial countries in Asia and Africa look to India as some kind of leader in the process of Asian and African countries achieving emancipation and freedom. On the part of India it should always be made clear that, while we desire to protect our interests wherever they are, we have no desire whatever to come in the way of the legitimate interests of the people of the country concerned. First importance must always be given to the interests of the indigenous inhabitants and their advance to full freedom.

As regards the Australian proposal that three or four other Powers should be associated with the Big Four in discussing the future of the ex-Italian colonies,[4] it seems to me that this might create some kind of an intermediate arrangement between the Big Four and the United Nations General Assembly. Whether this will lead to any solution of the problem, I do not know. Of course, it is desirable for the Big Four to consult other Powers concerned, but anything in the nature of compulsion of the Big Four might result in stultifying the efforts of the other three or four Powers associated for this purpose. Who these three or four Powers may be, I do not know; probably India may be one of them. I suggest that this proposal might only be supported in so far as it can be brought about by the agreement of the Big Four. If there is no such agreement, then it simply means that the proposal does not fructify and we irritate some other Powers.

An effort should obviously be made to get this question of Italian colonies settled by the Big Four in cooperation with others. If it fails, there is no other course open apparently than for the United Nations Assembly to

4. On 21 August 1946, Dr. Evatt declared that the future of the Italian colonies should be decided not by the "Big Four" alone but by them and three other representatives chosen by the conference; failing agreement on the future status of the colonies within one year the matter should be referred not to the General Assembly of the United Nations but to a special meeting of all 21 Allied belligerents.

consider it.[5] I agree, however, with the statement of the leader of the Indian delegation that "the decision of a majority in the United Nations Assembly against Russian opposition must be avoided, if possible". This is not a mere question of upsetting Soviet or other susceptibilities. We cannot always avoid this in the case of any country. The U.S.S.R. are our neighbours and inevitably we shall have many dealings with them. We should not, therefore, needlessly adopt a course of action which brings us into conflict with them and at the same time yields no substantial result.

This note is rather general in scope. If the Secretary wishes to discuss this matter further with me, I shall gladly do so.

5. Under Article 23 of the Italian Peace Treaty, which was to come into force on 15 September 1947, the future of Italy's former African colonies was to be settled within one year, failing which the question had to be submitted to the U.N. General Assembly.

2. Proposal to Transfer Inhabitants of Slovakia to Hungary[1]

I have no doubt whatever that Czechoslovakia has suffered very greatly in the past from certain elements in the country's population like the Sudeten Germans and the Magyars in Slovakia.[2] I can very well understand their desire to send them away outside their territories[3] and yet it is difficult for us to agree to these forcible expulsions.[4] I suppose, in any event, if there is expulsion, there would be compensation given and all manner of facilities to

1. Note, 4 September 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 10(25)-cc/46, p. 3, National Archives of India.
2. The Sudeten Germans and Magyars betrayed the cause of Czechoslovakia at the time of the Munich Conference in 1938. The National Socialist Party of Konrad Henelein refused to abide by its earlier demands for autonomy conceded by the Czech Government, and asked for the territory inhabited by Sudeten Germans to be ceded to Germany.
3. Czechoslovakia desired transfer as it thought the Magyars and Sudeten Germans had played a treacherous role in 1938. She also feared that revisionists in Hungary would undoubtedly make use of the presence of a large number of Magyars in Slovakia as an excuse for demanding territorial concessions from Czechoslovakia at some future date.
4. Czechoslovakia wanted compulsory transfer to Hungary of a maximum of 200,000 inhabitants of Slovakia who were of Magyar ethnic origin.

allow the uprooted population to be able to settle down elsewhere. Presumably, all this would be done under the United Nations control.

However this may be, I agree with the leader of the Indian delegation[5] that it would be desirable for us to abstain from voting on this issue.

5. The leader of the Indian delegation advised on 31 August 1946 that though she had considerable sympathy with the Czechoslovakian point of view, it seemed to be impolitic to support a proposal involving the wholesale expulsion of a large minority population and if we did not oppose the best course was to abstain from voting.

3. Minority Problems in Czechoslovakia[1]

Magyar minority issue has been dealt with in Foreign telegram No. 8496 October 1st.[2] We are glad to note humanitarian safeguards[3] Czechoslovakia is ready to provide.

3. In light of your fuller explanation of Bratislava bridgehead issue,[4] Government of India agree that you should support Czech claim.

1. Cable to S.E. Runganadhan, New Delhi, 4 October 1946. Ministry of External Affairs, File No. 10(25)-cc/46, S. No. 9, National Archives of India. Runganadhan had asked for instructions regarding cessation of a small area at Bratislava to Czechoslovakia and transfer of more than 200,000 Magyars from Slovakia to Hungary.
2. The Government of India after reconsideration decided to support Czechoslovakia's proposal to transfer the Magyar minority to Hungary. It however emphasised that full compensation and every facility should be given to those affected.
3. Czechoslovakia agreed to retain and grant full citizenship rights to those Magyars who proved to be anti-fascist. It was also prepared to allow the population to take away all movable property and to fully compensate them for all immovable property.
4. The area of 20 sq. miles was low lying and of no use to Hungary for agriculture. Hungarians formed only one-third of the population.

4. To Samuel E. Runganadhan[1]

New Delhi
25 October 1946

Dear Runganadhan,
Now that the Peace Conference has ended its deliberations, I should like to express to you Government's appreciation of the part which you and your colleagues of India's delegation played in them and of all the hard work put in by the secretarial staff.

At this distance it has at times been difficult to follow all the cross currents of negotiations and the exact implications of conflicting proposals; but we have followed them well enough to realize that your task was extraordinarily complicated and that to steer a satisfactory course was no easy matter.

I am sending similar letters to Bhore,[2] Pillai[3] and Wadia.[4] Would you kindly thank your Advisers and staff on Government's behalf?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. External Affairs Department File No. 2(2)-UNO I/47, National Archives of India.
2. Joseph William Bhore (1878-1960); Dewan of Cochin, 1914-19; Secretary to the High Commissioner for India, London, 1920; Secretary to Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands, 1924; Acting Member of Governor-General's Executive Council, 1926-27; Member of Governor-General's Executive Council, Department of Industries and Labour, 1930-32 and Commerce and Railways, 1932-35; Prime Minister of Bhopal, 1945; member, Indian delegation to Paris Peace Conference, 1946.
3. Narayana Raghavan Pillai (b. 1898); entered I.C.S., 1922; Secretary to Government of India, Commerce Department, 1942; Cabinet Secretary, 1942-52; Secretary-General, Ministry of External Affairs, 1952-60.
4. Navroji Jehangir Wadia; acting Judge and Sessions Judge, Bombay, 1923; Deputy Secretary, Government of Bombay, Legal Department, 1925; Officiating Judge of Bombay High Court, 1933-44.

11

MISCELLANEOUS

1. To Jayaprakash Narayan[1]

New Delhi
6th September, 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,
I received your telegram about sepoy Suleiman who had been condemned to death. Your telegram reached me at midnight and the execution was due at sunrise the next day. On the previous day, however, I had received telegrams from Suleiman's mother. I enquired into the matter personally from the War Department, and the facts of the case were explained to me. The case was one of murder, pure and simple, and after the sentence every avenue of appeal and reconsideration had been exhausted. I hate a death penalty in any case, but in the circumstances I really did not know what I could do. I could advance no reason except my dislike of a death sentence, and as all the normal avenues of appeal had been exhausted I felt reluctantly that I had to leave it at that.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

1. Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. To Tej Bahadur Sapru[1]

New Delhi
8 September 1946

My dear Tej Bahadurji,
Your good wishes and blessings are very welcome and precious. I was very happy to receive your letter.[2] I am perfectly conscious of the great difficulties we have to face, but I am also conscious that there is a vast fund of goodwill in the country, in spite of present discord. I hope the discord will fade away and the goodwill will assert itself.

With my affectionate regards,

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. Tej Bahadur Sapru Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Sapru had sent his best wishes on the inauguration of the Interim Government and hoped that Nehru would tackle the communal problem in a generous spirit.

3. Gandhi Jayanti[1]

Gandhi Jayanti has for many years been a period of constructive activity and a rededication to the cause of India's freedom. During these days we pay our tribute of affection and respect to our leader, who has inspired us and kept our eyes fixed to high ideals and human emancipation. People who take part in politics get entangled in a thousand petty details and often forget those ideals, and compromise on vital issues. But Mahatma Gandhi has been there as a sentinel to pull us up when we go astray and to remind us constantly of what India must stand for.

So, during these days, when we are facing new and vital issues, we must not allow ourselves to lose sight of the wood for the trees. We must rededicate ourselves anew to the great cause of India's freedom and human emancipation for which the Mahatma has stood, and we must do this in the way most liked by him, that is, not by shouting and display but by earnest effort in furthering the constructive activities which he has so much at heart. Under his leadership we have come to the very threshold of freedom. There are still difficulties and obstacles, but undoubtedly we shall take the final step also under his wise guidance.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 18 September 1946. *The Hindu,* 20 September 1946.

4. Free Movement in Tribal Areas[1]

May I also draw your attention to the various restrictions in regard to entry and movement in the tribal areas in Assam? Many of our workers among the tribes cannot go there because of these restrictions. I suggest that these restrictions might be removed and freedom of movement acknowledged and established.

1. Note to Home Member, Interim Government, quoted by Tarlok Singh in his note dated 23 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 71-NEF/46, National Archives of India.

5. To Tej Bahadur Sapru[1]

New Delhi
23rd September 1946

My dear Tej Bahadurji,
I am very grateful for your affectionate letters and for your concern about me. You can rest assured that we take good care of ourselves and I do not think anything untoward will happen.[2]

I hope you are better now and will soon be able to move about. You must remember that in the days that are coming your help and advice will be needed by the country and we want you to be in good health for it.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Sapru had expressed his concern about Nehru's personal safety.

6. Land Acquired for Aerodromes[1]

As you know, a large number of sites for aerodromes were acquired by the War Department during the last four or five years. Many of these aerodromes are being closed up for air purposes and the land has got to be given back for agricultural purposes. One such large aerodrome[2] near Allahabad is being treated in this way and I was told that the land was going to be put up for auction. The peasants, who were the previous occupiers of this land and who had been given compensation for it, sent me a request that the land might be given back to them on their repaying the compensation that had been given to them. This seemed to be a reasonable request. It is desirable that in all such cases some preference should be shown to the old occupiers who were compulsorily removed. I hope that it will be possible to adopt some such policy in such matters.

1. Note to Baldev Singh, 30 September 1946. File No. 7(83)/48-PMS.
2. Iradatgunj aerodrome.

7. Passports for Communists[1]

I have spoken about this matter with H.M. (Home). I agree with much that he has written.[2] I have a feeling, however, that the denial of a passport gives greater prominence to the individual and to the refuser's act and undue publicity will result from it. The man cannot do much harm to us abroad. There are probably many like him in other countries. I would like H.M. (Home) to consider this aspect. The final decision will of course rest with him.

1. Note, 30 September 1946. External Affairs Department File No. 210(236)-P/46, pp. 17-18/notes, National Archives of India.
2. Patel, in his note of 21 September 1946, had recommended refusal of a passport to Sharaf Athar Ali, the correspondent of the *People's Age*, a journal of the Communist Party.

8. The Naga Areas[1]

When India is independent, as it is bound to be soon, it will not be possible for the British Government to hold on the Naga territory or any part of it.

This strip of land will be left isolated between India and China. Inevitably, therefore, this Naga territory must form part of India and of Assam with which it has developed such close associations.

It is our policy that tribal areas should have as much freedom and autonomy as possible so that they can live their own lives according to their own customs and desires.

Excluded areas should be incorporated with other areas. Tribal areas all over India present different problems. Independent India will have a special department both at the Centre and in the provinces concerned for protection and advancement of tribal areas. I do not want them to be swamped by people from other parts of the country, who might go there to exploit them to their own advantage.

1. Letter to the leaders of the Naga National Council, printed in the *National Herald*, 2 October 1946. The full text of the letter is not available.

9. To V.K. Krishna Menon[1]

New Delhi
3 October 1946

My dear Krishna,

...In one of your letters you mention Dange's report of firing on industrial workers.[2] I am not quite sure to what this refers. Most, if not all, of the firings in Bombay have been in connection with communal troubles. There was one other incident, however, in Gujarat, I think, and a very exaggerated and perverse account of it appeared in the *People's Age*. From inquiries made subsequently by very responsible people it was shown that this account was completely wrong. The *People's Age*, I might add, has developed a special technique for giving tendentious and exaggerated accounts.

The Kashmir situation is as bad as ever and it is possible that we might get more entangled in it as we cannot submit to what is happening there. As long as Sheikh Abdullah is in prison there is not going to be any peace. The Congress Working Committee is agitated about it.

I propose to take some action in regard to Goa; possibly we might inform the British Government about our views. Goa is a sink of corruption and ineptitude and reaction.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Krishna Menon had written on 26 September 1946 that an official of the Soviet embassy had appeared disturbed about the reports, based on Dange's statement in the Assembly, of the firing on trade union demonstrations in Bombay.

10. To Padmaja Naidu[1]

New Delhi
7-10-46

My dear,
It is ages since I have written to you—or it seems ages to me for the last month has been a long one. My life and activities have been so changed that I do not quite know how to carry on any work outside the official sphere or to have any kind of personal life—I cannot write letters—I must dictate them. Of the 300 or so letters I receive daily at home (apart from the office) I see very few. Other people open them and put a few of their choice before me. Even these pile up unanswered. I suppose all this will sort itself out soon if this life continues long enough. But for the moment it is a burden and a ceaseless strain.

For a full month past I have been wanting to write to you. Every day I have thought of it and decided to write in the evening or rather at night. But after midnight I have felt too tired to do anything. And so day after day has passed.

This is not a letter as I would like it to be. That must wait. But this waiting business has gone on long enough and so at last I am at least sending you this note with all my love. Your letters and telegrams cheered me greatly. I wish you had been here these days. But you will come.

Nan comes here on the 10th and goes off to the U.S.A. a few days later.[2]

Love,

Jawahar

1. Padmaja Naidu Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Vijayalakshmi Pandit left for the United States on 13 October 1946 to lead the Indian delegation to the U.N. General Assembly.

11. Subhas Bose[1]

From time to time some item of news appears in the press relating to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. It is stated that he is alive, that he is coming to India soon, that he has been seen in some part of India, that somebody has received a message from him and so on and so forth. Sometimes even a date is fixed for his public appearance in India. When closely examined these items of news turn out to be just rumours or vague hopes. But this constant repetition of this theme has undoubtedly made many people believe that Shri Subhas Chandra Bose is alive. I do not think there is the slightest justification for this belief.

For some months after the news of his death came I was rather doubtful of its veracity. Later, when Col. Habibur Rahman gave me a detailed eye-witness account[2] of the accident which resulted in the death, I became convinced of it. No piece of news has come to me since then or has appeared in the press, that has shaken that conviction. All of us would like him to be alive, but it is no good feeding ourselves with rumour which is without foundation.

Col. Habibur Rahman has written to me again expressing his great distress at the prevalence of these rumours. He assures me that he personally saw the accident in which he himself was involved. Netaji had sustained a serious head injury in addition to burns on the upper part of his body. In the hospital, Netaji and Col. Habibur Rahman had their beds side by side and the latter was present when Netaji died on August 18. When it was not found possible to take the body to Singapore or Tokyo, the body was cremated in the presence of Col. Habibur Rahman who subsequently took the ashes.

Nothing could be clearer than Col. Habibur Rahman's account as an eye-witness of all these sad occurrences. In view of his statement, it seems to me absurd and completely wrong to circulate rumours about Netaji being alive. I hope that people will not indulge in this irresponsible talk which raises false hopes which are doomed to disappointment.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 11 October 1946. *National Herald*, 12 October 1946.
2. Habibur Rahman had reported that Subhas Bose and he had [illegible], after the fall of Japan, from Bangkok for Tokyo. On the way the plane crashed at Taihoku in Formosa and both of them were removed to a nearby hospital where Subhas Bose died on 18 August 1945.

12. A Uniform Labour Policy[1]

The labour problem is one of the most important problems facing the country today. There is urgent need to work out a plan to suit the whole people of India, for if provinces follow different policies it will create difficulties.

Strikes may become unnecessary at some future time when the differences between the employer and the employed disappear, but at the moment what is needed is to devise methods which will ameliorate the working and living conditions of the workers. Such help should be aimed at assisting the workers to stand on their own feet.

1. Inaugural address at the Labour Ministers' conference, New Delhi, 14 October 1946. From the *National Herald*, *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* of 15 October 1946.

13. Bhulabhai Desai and Hassan Suhrawardy[1]

May I with your permission, Sir, refer to the passing away, since this House last met, of two eminent Members of this Assembly, Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai and Dr. Hassan Suhrawardy?[2] Some of us here who are newcomers to this House were not associated with them in their work in this House. Most others had intimate association with them. We also, in other fields, knew them and worked with them. Mr. Bhulabhai Desai played during the last many years a very important part in this House. His brilliant intellect was directed to the service of the cause of the country's freedom, and in this

1. Speech in the Legislative Assembly, 28 October 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VII, 1946, 28 October 1946 - 11 November 1946, pp. 94-95.
2. Hassan Suhrawardy (1884-1946); physician of Calcutta; member, Bengal Legislative Council, 1921-25; Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, 1930-34; member, Public Services Commission, Bengal, 1937-39; adviser to Secretary of State for India, 1939-44.

House, as well as outside, he served that cause not only by the brilliance of his intellect but by the sacrifices which he made. His last great feat which is enshrined in the minds of his countrymen was his brilliant defence of the trials known as I.N.A. trials and the last speech which he delivered at that trial will long be found to be enshrined in the annals of freedom. Perhaps it was that great feat of his that hastened his death. He was an ill man at the time, but he persevered and when he went away it was only gradually to fade away.

Dr. Hassan Suhrawardy was eminent in many walks of life. He shone as an educationist, as a physician and in public life. I knew Mr. Bhulabhai Desai very intimately outside this House. We were colleagues. Dr. Hassan Suhrawardy was a much older acquaintance, with whom I first came into contact 27 years ago. In spite of the fact that during the intervening years, we did not see much of each other, yet the memory of our old acquaintance and friendship endured, for Dr. Hassan Suhrawardy was eminently an attractive and likable person.

Well, Sir, death comes to all of us and it is an odd thing that though death is a certainty, yet we grieve for it. Life and death come one after another and hordes of people die unremembered and live unremembered also. But the question is how a person has lived his life and how he has met the final challenge of death. If he has lived worthily for a worthy cause, and if he has died bravely, then it has been well with him. But if he has not lived worthily, it does not matter much whether he is alive or is dead. I am afraid that most people are tied up in their petty interests and do not pay much attention to the big things of life. But to those of us who have the honour of coming to this House or serving large causes elsewhere, it is given to some extent to shoulder these burdens, sometimes as with some of us here, who are newcomers to this House—and may I say personally for myself, a novice, a complete novice in the ways of this House. I seek your indulgence and the indulgence of this House for my inexperience in any errors or mistakes that I may commit—we have been here, some of us for some little time past facing days and nights full of toil and responsibility and worry which is no light task, and when I say this and when I think of those who have in their own way, in the past, carried this burden, I sympathise with them very greatly. And, so, when I think of those who have in other days and in other manners faced this Assembly and carried on the work of this Assembly not from this side of this House but from the other and laid the foundations in many ways for the present, I am thankful to them. I am somewhat apprehensive at the same time whether we who follow them will also live up to the mark they set down. Therefore, Sir, I should like to pay on behalf of the House this homage to the memory of the two great members of this House who served not only this House but the country in the cause of freedom.

14. To Tej Bahadur Sapru[1]

New Delhi
October 31, 1946

My dear Tej Bahadurji,
Thank you for your letter of the 23rd October. I am very sorry to learn that you have again been ill. Personally, I have no great faith in the Unani or the Ayurvedic systems, though I have no doubt that occasionally they do succeed in producing results. I am glad, therefore, that you have reverted to what might be called the scientific system.

My Frontier visit was interesting and exciting. The newspapers played up to it somewhat and many of the accounts were not quite correct.

I appreciate fully what you say about the recent speeches that have been delivered by some members of the Muslim League. Obviously, we cannot have two cabinets. Something will have to be done about it. We have to face a difficult situation all over the country. Perhaps it was inevitable after all that has been said and done during the past years.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

15. To the Maharaja of Nepal[1]

New Delhi
October 31, 1946

My dear Maharaja Sahib,
Thank you for your letter. I think it would be best for you to send your donation for flood relief in Assam to the Assam Premier, Mr. G.N. Bardoloi. I am informing him of this fact.

There is a great deal of suffering in India today from shortage of food, from floods as well as from arson and looting. We shall be very grateful for help to give relief.

I thank you for your concern about my visit to the Frontier areas. I had quite an interesting and exciting time.

1. J.N. Collection.

Mahatma Gandhi has now gone to Bengal and intends visiting the Noakhali area which has suffered so much during the recent weeks. His health is not good and we are all anxious about him.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

16. Madan Mohan Malaviya[1]

Deep sorrow is ours when we feel that we shall no more see that bright star[2] who has illumined our lives, inspired us from our childhood days and taught us to love India. And yet joy also that we had high privilege of knowing one of those great spirits whom India has produced in successive ages from immemorial times. Though he may be no more with us he will live in the proud structure of free India which he built from the foundations upwards. May we prove worthy of him.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Telegram to Govind Malaviya, New Delhi, 12 November 1946. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Madan Mohan Malaviya died on 12 November 1946.

17. The Passing of a Giant[1]

Sir, may I crave your leave to refer to the passing away yesterday afternoon of a giant among men, a great Indian, one who was a Member of this Assembly for a long number of years and who was also a Member of the Imperial Legislative Council which preceded this Assembly. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya died yesterday afternoon at the ripe age of 85, and with his

1. Speech in the Legislative Assembly, 13 November 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VIII, 1946, 12 November 1946 - 18 November 1946, p. 958.

passing away, perhaps it may be said that a certain age in Indian politics closes. He was one of those giants who laid the foundations of modern Indian nationalism, and, year by year, he laid the foundations and built brick by brick and stone by stone the noble edifice of Indian freedom. They laboured in days when they had to face enormous difficulties, they had little support and we, who have succeeded to them and we, who have in a large measure been benefited by their labours, perhaps hardly realise the conditions in which they began this work. Many of us think, looking back to those days, that those people who worked then were not quite so advanced as we are, they were more moderate, more accommodating or compromising, not realising that the environment in which they worked was infinitely more difficult than the one in which we work now. We have changed since then. We have our difficulties which in some ways are greater. Nevertheless, we function in an entirely different atmosphere and it is a little difficult to capture the air, the atmosphere of those old days. Some of us, many of us, have grown up under, what shall I say, the tradition of some of those elders of the national movement. Speaking for myself, almost my earliest memories of childhood are connected so far as Indian politics are concerned with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Somehow Indian politics took shape in my boyish eyes with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's face and figure. I remember still those early days as a boy when I listened to his brilliant oratory and was powerfully moved. I remember in later years, it was 27 years ago in the Imperial Legislative Council, when I sat in the visitors' gallery listening to his tremendous oration in regard to the Punjab martial law events.[2] Whether one agreed with him or whether one differed from him, I doubt if there is anyone in India who did not respect him, who did not admire him and who was not affected by his very lovable, kind and gentle personality. So, now, when this last of the old giants is gone, gone perhaps at the right time—one cannot expect anyone to live on and on for ever and ever,—nevertheless it is something which affects us all very much, as always a break with a certain age affects one and certainly in regard to a person like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who has been not only a kind of father of Indian nationalism but almost a father to many of us and under whose shadow we learnt much about public service, it is a deep wrench. He was not merely a figure working and speaking in Assemblies, but as the world knows, he left enormous achievements to his credit, chief among them being the great University at Benares which he established.[3]

2. In 1919 Malaviya had strongly opposed the Rowlatt Bills and the Indemnity Bill which sought to exonerate officials from the responsibility for the excesses during the martial law regime in the Punjab.
3. The Benares Hindu University was established in 1921 with the donations collected mainly by Malaviya.

So, Sir, I think it is fitting that we should pay our homage to the memory of this giant amongst men, whom it was our privilege to meet, to work under and learn under. May I beg of you to convey on behalf of this House to the family of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya our deep sorrow and our condolences at this unhappy event.

18. The Need for Civil Marriages[1]

I have listened carefully to the speech of the mover of this motion as well as some other speeches in the House and repeatedly I have gone back to see what this Bill[2] exactly was, because it seemed to me that the speeches often had nothing to do with the Bill. They rambled all over the place, referred to all manner of practices all over India while the Bill itself is quite an extraordinarily simple affair.

Now, the subject of marriage reform is a subject which obviously interested every individual and it is easy to think of all these ramifications but it does confuse the issue. The subject before us is very simple. For my part, I am entirely in favour of some kind of general provision for civil marriages, and I hope soon this House will adopt some such measure. This measure does not go so far. It seeks to remedy, as far as I can see, certain lacunae, certain difficulties which have arisen, and all of us know that there are numerous marriages amongst Hindus today which may or may not be considered strictly legal. Some people may not attach much importance to legality, but other people do, and obviously whether they do or not, it does affect all manner of things—may be in regard to subsequent inheritance and other matters—whether the marriage is legal or not. Now in order to avoid those difficulties, this proposal is made for a couple, who have been married according to certain religious rites and who may perhaps doubt the validity of their marriage, to go through the civil form to validate it. I may say at once that I do not approve of some of the provisions as suggested in Dr. Deshmukh's

1. Speech in the Legislative Assembly, 15 November 1946. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. VIII, 1946, 12 November 1946 - 18 November 1946, pp. 1140-1141.
2. The private Bill to amend the Special Marriage Act of 1872 sought to enable marriages performed according to Hindu religious rites to be registered later.

Bill, more especially right at the end where he talks about the dissolution of the marriage when the civil marriage takes place.[3] I do not see any reason why anything should be dissolved at all, but the general principle underlying this Bill is to enable people who may have contracted marriages, which are not strictly legal, to legalize them by civil marriage. I do not see how anybody can possibly object to that. It is a permissive clause; it does not compel anybody. People have talked about divorce and other matters.[4] Nobody in this particular Bill is changing the Hindu law in regard to divorce which remains exactly where it was. I am not at the moment talking about the desirability of divorce or not. For my part it is desirable but it does not arise here. We are not dealing with divorce in this, and as my Honourable friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa, said among Hindus the vast majority do indulge in divorce.[5] We should not think too much about the top rank Hindus and consider the rest out of the pale. But this measure has nothing to do with divorce. That must be clear. It only enables a couple who may doubt the validity of their marriage to legalise and validate it. Doing so, they do not put an end to their previous marriage or dissolve it—I hope they will not—and no change ought to occur in the status of the children of the previous marriage.[6] They remain under the law under which they had so far remained. I do not understand this question as to what will happen to the children if the second marriage takes place. It is true if there is a civil marriage, the couple then come under the Civil Marriage Act and can, if they so choose, have a divorce. They can do that. That does not affect Hindus generally. If those two persons choose to do so, I do not see why anyone should come in their way.

I do beg of the House to consider the Bill as it is, or rather the main principles, because, exactly as it is, it may be that many members do not wholly approve—I do not approve of all the detailed provisions—but the main provision, the main principle behind it, is good. I should like to go further. However, it has come in this limited form to us and it comes only as a proposal to be sent to the Select Committee which, I hope, can easily amend it, and rectify the errors committed in the original draft. So I do hope the House will approve of this proposal, not so much on account of Dr. Deshmukh's arguments but on account of the Bill itself.

3. Clause 12 of the Bill laid down that on a marriage being registered under the amended Act the previous marriage performed according to local rites, customs and Vedic principles would be deemed as dissolved.
4. The mover contended that two main objects of his Bill were to provide for monogamy and to modify the system of divorce.
5. Sri Prakasa had said that in northern India divorces were most common among the lowest castes of Hindus.
6. The Bill stipulated that the children born after the date of the civil marriage would be governed by the personal law of succession and those born before it by the general law of succession.

19. To Geoffrey Francis Fisher[1]

London
6 December 1946

Dear Archbishop,
I am very grateful to you for your letter of the 4th December.[2] I would have much liked to have the pleasure of meeting you, but our stay has been much too brief. I hope it will be possible for me to come back to England sometime next year and then I shall endeavour to see you.

You will realise, of course, that both as an Indian and as one who has some responsibility for taking vital decisions in India, I am intensely exercised over the present situation in my country. There is nothing that I and my colleagues are not prepared to do to advance the cause of peace, freedom and progress in India. Indeed our lives have been spent in this endeavour. The question we have to consider is how best to achieve this and how to avoid anything which may lead to greater perils. We try to find an answer to this question in all earnestness of spirit. As one intimately associated with developments in India during many years, I have the advantage of understanding the situation better than most others and the disadvantage of being myself involved in it. I try to take a dispassionate view. I can assure you that we shall do our utmost to promote unity and freedom from strife, but it often happens, as you well know, that a false step taken at the wrong moment leads to greater strife and disunity. We have seen this happen frequently enough and we wish to avoid it.

I thank you again for your letter and your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Referring to the London conference, Archbishop Fisher of Canterbury had emphasised the importance of mutual trust and compromise.

20. The National Flag and the National Anthem[1]

India has no authorised flag or national anthem at present. Obviously a flag will have to be devised and an anthem chosen. I understand that these questions have been raised and are being considered in some of the Dominions,

1. Note, 14 January 1947. External Affairs Department File No. 1(2)-con/47, pp. 4-5/notes, National Archives of India.

notably Canada. For the present we shall have to do without them. The Viceroy's flag is hardly suitable and I suggest that Mr. Asaf Ali should avoid the use of any flag for the time being. Non-crested note paper may be used.

At a somewhat later stage these questions might be considered by the Government. It would be premature to do so at present. A flag cannot be devised privately. It must have some significance and national approval.

21. Cable to Rajani Palme Dutt[1]

The police raids on the Communists[2] took place without the authority or knowledge of the Ministers. They were due to police action in connection with investigation of a case instituted against a newspaper in Bombay.

1. Printed in *Free Press Journal*, 17 January 1947. This cable was in reply to Palme Dutt's cable: "Deep concern here over police raids on communists. Can you inform if authorised by Indian Ministers? Anxiously awaiting details."
2. A country-wide search of the offices of the Communist Party of India and of allied organizations, including the Kisan Sabha, the Students' Federation and the Friends of the Soviet Union, was made on 14 January 1947 under the direction of the Government of India in connection with the publication six months earlier of a series of articles entitled the "Operation Asylum"—which revealed certain military instructions—in the Communist Party weekly, the *People's Age*.

22. Vitality in Painting[1]

Not being an expert, I cannot give any opinion on art but what I like is vitality in pictures. Many pictures which may be excellent in their own way lack in vitality. I feel Gopal Ghose's[2] paintings attract me mainly because of

1. Speech at an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Gopal Ghose, New Delhi, 18 January 1947. From the *National Herald, The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times*, 19 January 1947.
2. (b. 1913); taught art at the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta, 1940-45, and also at the Bengal Engineering College and the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Calcutta.

their brightness and life in them. They are full of repose and make one sleepy. India needs to develop vitality in every aspect of life, and the paintings of Gopal Ghose show that vitality.

23. Christians in a Free India[1]

I send my good wishes to the All-India Christian Conference at its 27th annual session. I hope that, as in the past, this Conference will stand for the independence of India and for the freedom and equal opportunity for all the people of India. India today has to face many disruptive tendencies and yet at the same time the forces for unity are also working. I hope the All-India Christian Conference will lend its weight to the latter.

The President of the Conference is my valued colleague, Dr. John Matthai, with whom it has been my privilege to work in the Government of India during the last 4½ months. I am sure that under his wise guidance the Conference will give the right lead.

1. Message to the All-India Christian Conference, New Delhi, 18 January 1947.

24. To Harry Pollitt[1]

New Delhi
22 January 1947

Dear Pollitt,
I have your letter of the 17th January.[2] As I informed Palme Dutt, the police searches of Communist Party offices were undertaken without any reference to or knowledge of the Members of the Government.[3] It was police action in

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Pollitt had expressed deep concern on behalf of the Executive Committee of the British Communist Party "over the news of the police measures which have been taken against the Communist Party of India."
3. See *ante,* item 21.

connection with some case that is going on in Bombay. So far as I know, very few persons were arrested and these have been let out on bail. The main object apparently of the search was to find some confidential papers of the Defence Department.

None of us desire any attack on the working class movement and we shall certainly do our utmost to prevent these. But I should like to point out to you that the Communist Party of India is not only bitterly opposed to the present Government of India, but is often employing methods of violence. This leads to troubles, and more specially in the present strained communal atmosphere abnormal steps have sometimes to be taken in order to avoid graver consequences.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A Note on the Indian Situation[1]

It is difficult to simplify complex issues which have their roots in the distant past and which involve not only far-reaching political and economic structures but also the psychological and emotional outlook of a whole people. A purely political analysis of present-day phenomena may be helpful to some extent, but it does not carry us far as it ignores the really important factors that govern the situation. In a country under foreign rule the dominating passion is to be rid of that rule at almost any cost. This passion, natural and inevitable as it is, often prevents an adequate consideration of wider issues. In India thus the dominating passion, regardless of parties and differences of political opinions, is for independence and the ending of British rule and every kind of political and economic control from outside. Almost this passion amounts to a kind of religious faith. The National Congress represents this clearly and unequivocally; other organisations, including the Muslim League, are also pledged to independence; even Indian officials and army officers serving the British Government think in these terms though they may not express themselves openly.

Dominion Status, whatever that may mean, has been rejected by the public mind, although it has never been offered. The reasons for rejection are many, but the main one is that it is considered a subterfuge for retaining economic control and protecting British vested interests in India against Indian interests. India is not an appendage or growth of Britain, like Canada or Australia, and even today Indians are treated as helots and sometimes racially segregated in the British Dominions. To be associated with this British Empire, unless that Empire ceases to be an empire, is an idea which Indians cannot tolerate, for inevitably it means an inferior and subordinate status. At the same time it has been repeatedly stated that India does not want an isolated independence. We do not believe this is possible for any nation in the future and we should like to work for larger federations, and ultimately a world federation of free nations. We have no objection to an alliance with Britain on equal terms or to joining a group of nations of which Britain also is a member. But we see no reason why we should be limited to the British group. Our attraction is much more towards closer association with China and some other nations, and this attraction is growing. If England joins a group containing India and China, we have no objection.

1. Delhi, 14 February 1942. Given to Madame Chiang Kai-shek and Hollington Tong, China's Vice-Minister of Information, who were on a visit to India at this time. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

We must not be slaves of words, but at the same time words cannot be ignored for they carry bundles of ideas. Thus the words 'independence' and 'Dominion Status' create certain powerful reactions on the public mind, the former favourable, the latter unfavourable. But words, after all, are not so important and what really counts is the reality behind those words. That reality is the full transference of power into the hands of elected representatives of the Indian people. We have arrived at a stage when a partial transference is of little good to anybody and leads to an unstable government with two or more groups pulling in different directions. A semi-transfer would especially be undesirable in the war crisis today. It would not be accepted for one thing. Apart from this, it would aggravate our other problems, many of which are of British creation.

This is an important aspect of the question. So long as even partial British control remains, disruptive and reactionary elements in the country will look to it and will continually give trouble. The main energy of a new Government will be given to dealing with these elements and even so it will not be able to settle the problem satisfactorily, for the British elements will be intriguing with them. We have had disastrous experience of this in the past as well as in the present. Only when all alien control is out of the picture and every group and individual knows that it cannot rely on outsiders, will it be possible to settle internal problems satisfactorily.

It is said that a change-over in the midst of a war crisis is a risky business and may lead to an upsetting of even the present effort. There is of course that risk for every major change involves a risk and the ending of an old-established foreign-dominated structure of government will undoubtedly release new forces and produce new problems. But that risk has to be taken, indeed not to do so is to drift inevitably to disaster. If one thing is certain it is this: the British Government in India is completely incapable of dealing with the situation and has made a hopeless mess of it. Its prestige is at vanishing point and even its own officers and officials have lost all faith in it. It is bitterly disliked by the people and those who serve it, in the army or otherwise, have a feeling of being mercenaries. It is likely that in the future it may have to concentrate more on the big cities and ports and leave the vast number of villages in the rural areas to shift for themselves. Thus British rule will fade away from the greater part of India without giving place then to any ordered government. That will have its dangers and it is our effort now to organise the rural areas in order to preserve order.

Industrial production, though it has gone up considerably in India, has not developed as it should have done because of British opposition to the building up of new industries in India which might conflict with British interests in the future. It is amazing how even war interests have been sacrificed to this. Indian industrialists, financiers, scientists and economists are full of dissatisfaction. Indian workers are also dissatisfied and as a result of

possible danger from air raids are leaving factories in the threatened areas. They have no national motive or urge as they would have if they realized that their freedom or the freedom of the country was involved. Food scarcity is growing and is likely to cause trouble.

Only a national government, and only the realisation that freedom had come to us and we were fighting to preserve it, can possibly meet this situation adequately. Such a realisation would immediately release vast energy and enthusiasm among the people and a cheerful acceptance of the perils and risks involved.

At present there is a great deal of fellow feeling and sympathy for China, largely due to continuous propaganda on behalf of the Congress. But it is undoubted that the major feeling is one of anger and distrust of the British Government and their reverses in the war give to many people in India, who do not and cannot appreciate the larger issues, a feeling of satisfaction. Japan, though not at all liked, gains some sympathy because it is teaching the British a lesson. The differential treatment given to Indian officers and soldiers and the offensive way in which the British authorities have dealt with them has led to minor mutinies in the Indian army.

The Indian demand has been a recognition of India's independence and the right of the Indian people to draw up their own constitution through their own elected representatives. The future relations of India and England to be settled by representatives of both parties meeting them and considering all mutual problems. In practice this would mean the recognition being given immediately and a national government being set up. It would not mean a break with England as anyhow the change-over will take time and the manner of it will depend on circumstances. The use of the words 'Dominion Status' will confuse the issue and create opposition in many influential circles in India. It is better therefore to avoid using such words. What may be said is that a full transference of power should take place and the situation as it exists in Canada etc. should be immediately aimed at in India—with this proviso that India's right to independence and to the framing of its constitution should be recognised. Further steps can be taken with mutual consultation.

India's struggle for freedom has inevitably gone on in some form or other ever since the British invasion and aggression. It has taken the form of a major rebellion and many minor revolts; of constitutional action and long pleading and argument with the British Government; of direct action and indirect action; of violent methods and peaceful ones; we have tried all these and at last we adopted the peaceful technique of direct action on a mass scale. We did so because it appealed to us and also because no other effective means were open to us. This technique, though not always spectacular, has brought us rich results already.

This technique of peaceful action was confined by us to our struggle for

national freedom against the British Government. It did not apply to defence against foreign invasion, nor did it lay down how we would behave as a free country. But Mr. Gandhi's pacifist views and his towering position as India's leader influenced our whole movement and many people. They did not become pacifists, yet the logic of events made them realise the difficulty of our adopting any other course without long preparation.

When the European war began in September 1939 the Congress Working Committee issued a long statement[2] dated 14th September 1939 defining national policy. This is an important document as it governs that policy still. It is given on p. 14 of the booklet *Congress and War Crisis*. Since then the policy of the British Government has been so amazingly offensive and hostile and at the same time so thoroughly inefficient and incompetent in every department that feeling in India has hardened greatly and become uncompromising except on the basis of full freedom.

If we had had a chance two and a half years ago we might have built up a great war machine, a great industrial machine, and produced large quantities of aeroplanes etc. That chance was denied us and now it is extraordinarily difficult to catch up and think in terms of producing trained armies within a few months. The reaction therefore is that it is safer (and apparently the only possible course left to us in the immediate future) not to think of any effective military resistance but rather to build up other forms of resistance against foreign invasion. If the Indian armies in Malaya, Singapore and Burma on the one side, and in the Middle East on the other side are defeated, then from a military point of view not much is left for effective defence in India itself, and new armies cannot be created in time. But organised peaceful resistance can be offered on a large scale even then and this would fit in with Mr. Gandhi's methods and technique. Many people are thinking on these lines. Of course what will ultimately be done depends on many uncertain factors and the actual position at the time the decision has to be made.

Certainly we cannot, under any circumstances, evade responsibility whenever it comes to us, however grave the position. Certainly we must try our utmost to keep India intact and prevent invasion and aggression. Certainly we must not submit to an invader or aggressor whatever the consequences. This is the fundamental Congress position. Its application depends on the actual circumstances.

It is clear that whether we can produce new armies or not, we can certainly speed up production in a hundred ways and organize our people.

Mr. Gandhi thinks that India can play a great part in not only future post-war problems but also, when the time and opportunity come, in helping to end the war. He does not think in terms of India being a weak nation

2. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 10, section 3, item 6.

which has to submit to superior military prowess. He hopes that if India sticks to the right path, she will play this great part and lead the world to a new order where armed might does not overawe nations. He is not a negative pacifist but an aggressive one who refuses to surrender and fights by his own methods.

Whether Mr. Gandhi's line is capable of adoption in the present circumstances of the world is a very arguable matter. It must seem rather fantastic to people and nations suffering the barbarities of modern warfare. And yet this has to be borne in mind as it greatly influences India, though India or the Congress are not wholly converted to it. A free India will function as it chooses and this functioning will no doubt depend on external and internal conditions and on world happenings. Mr. Gandhi, it should always be remembered, is an intensely practical man and adapts himself to his changing environment.

We have thus to consider the problem in India from this practical side. What can we do under existing circumstances so as to safeguard our own freedom as well as the cause of freedom throughout the world? But before we can function we must have freedom to function and that can only come when British control is completely withdrawn. A very comforting feature of the situation is the growing comradeship between China and India, for on their friendship and cooperation much will depend. They are both essentially non-aggressive, peaceful nations and they can serve as a powerful counterpoise to the violent aggression of European nations and Japan.

Long arguments sometimes do not clarify a situation so much as an intimate glimpse into an individual's or a group's mind. It is interesting therefore to recall what was said in February 1933 in the British Parliament during a debate on Japan's invasion of Manchuria. Many leading British statesmen spoke then and supported Japan's aggression. Sir John Simon (now Lord Simon and still a prominent member of the British Cabinet), who was Foreign Minister, supported Japan's case. He had done so also at Geneva[3] and been complimented on it by the Japanese representative there. One of the most interesting and significant speeches delivered was that of Mr. L.S. Amery in the House of Commons on February 27, 1933. He said:...[4]

Mr. L.S. Amery is today a prominent member of the British Cabinet and is Secretary of State for India and as such is responsible for British

3. At the League of Nations.
4. Omission in the source. Justifying Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931-32, Amery said that Japan had needed markets and had acted with the object of creating peace and order in Manchuria and defending herself against the continual aggression of vigorous Chinese nationalism. He added, "Our whole policy in India, our whole policy in Egypt, stand condemned, if we condemn Japan." See also *Selected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 29.

policy towards India. This will give some idea of what kind of thing we have to deal with. Mr. Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, has all along been a bitter enemy of Indian freedom. Their whole policy has been one of unrelenting opposition to it and of insult to Indian nationalism. For them there is no question of any advance except in the distant hereafter. There is argument about Dominion Status and other such like things, but as a matter of fact nothing of the kind has ever been offered. Far lesser offers made by Indian moderate politicians (who have been friends of the British) have been rejected by the British Government. All advances by the Congress during the past two and a half years have been treated with contempt. This is the picture which India has before her eyes and she reacts in anger to it. She sees that British imperialism wants to hold on to her and to continue to exploit her. With this she cannot cooperate. And yet because of the larger causes and issues involved, we have sought not to embarrass the war effort.

2. The Real Solution of the Indian Problem[1]

Like some Greek tragedy inexorably moving on to its predestined end, the World War continues and spreads its tentacles. And yet the real tragedy behind it all is the inability of those on whom responsibility rests today to see the problem as a whole and seek to find its solution. War is primarily supposed to be a soldier's job, and yet it is always much more than that and the moral and psychological aspects dominate, for it is ultimately these that represent the urges that drive men to action. This is especially so in total war which affects vast numbers of human beings. This war is obviously something much more than a war; it is a vast revolution ending an epoch of history and ushering in an order which will be entirely different.

It is in this context that the problem of India and Asia must be considered. Western nations must realise that it is no longer possible to think in terms of empire and domination or holding on to special privileges or racial discrimination. All this is no matter for bargaining or arriving at interim settlements for a temporary solution. The issues are too serious for bargaining and to defer a real solution is to lose the substance for a fading shadow, and meanwhile to affect the fortunes of the war itself.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was great and far-seeing enough to break through diplomatic precedents during his recent visit to India and seek

1. Note written at Allahabad, 28 February 1942. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

to go down to fundamentals. That visit was a historic one presaging new alignments in Asia affecting the world.

The Indian problem can only be approached on the basis of Indian freedom. Nothing else will make a vital difference or move our millions to effective action. Until they realise that they have achieved freedom and are fighting to defend and preserve it, all else is unimportant. To talk of reforms and minor changes and what will happen at the end of the war, as British politicians do, is mere quibbling.

The situation changes from day to day and it is not possible to be precise in a changing situation. But certain essentials remain. The independence of India has to be recognized without any reservations, as well as the right of the Indian people to frame their own constitution without outside interference. This is the first essential. In the immediate present a provisional National Government should be formed responsible to the Indian people and not to the Viceroy or the British Government. The question of minorities does not really arise in the present crisis and in any event all reasonable and possible protection should be given to them. When the Constituent Assembly meets later it is open to their representatives to make any proposals. There will either be agreement or the matter may be referred to an international tribunal. Or ultimately the problem will be solved by conflict. The risk has to be taken for there is no other way. The Indian princes may for the present be left out of consideration and not interfered with, but it is clear that they cannot continue as they are and Indian freedom will affect their position vitally.

All this involves great changes and risks. It means the ending of a long established empire, but that empire cannot possibly continue and the sooner this is realised the better. Risks have to be faced. War itself is full of risks. But a friendly settlement will make a vast difference to all concerned and release tremendous forces on the side of freedom and democracy. India's sympathies are there already; the vital urge to defend a cause that is hers will then come.

3. Only a Free India Can Help China[1]

The immediate problem before India is how to meet the menace of invasion and all that this might lead to. The way the British Government is tackling

1. Statement written on 23 June 1942 for *The News Chronicle*. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

it is so hopelessly inadequate and fraught with so much danger to India that it is becoming impossible for us to remain passive spectators of India's ruin. The present way is neither good enough to help China nor to defend India. Those of us who are passionately attached to the cause of China and who wish to avoid at all costs an Axis victory are alarmed at the inevitable consequences of British policy in India. This policy especially since the Cripps negotiations and the amazing statements made by Sir Stafford Cripps subsequently has led to a rapid growth of undesirable tendencies and an intense anti-British sentiment among the people. We want to check these tendencies for they are dangerous for India's future and will disable her from meeting invasion effectively. We want all Indians to have the will to resist Japanese aggression and never to submit. We want to help China to the best of our ability. But it is quite impossible to do any of these things effectively within the framework of the present British structure and policy in India. Risks must be taken in an attempt to change this for complacently to allow it to remain is the greatest risk of all. The defence of India can only be effective under a free government and with the full cooperation and goodwill of the Indian people. The present policy of the British Government in India has alienated vast numbers of people and created a dangerous situation. We must have full freedom to reverse this process and line up the Indian people for defence and for help to China. To call this embarrassing the defence of India and China is to be blind to existing facts. It is British policy in India which has in the past and in the present embarrassed the defence of India and prevented effective help being given to China by bottling up the enormous potential strength of India and by antagonising Indian opinion. This strength can now only be released by acknowledgment of independence and their cooperation as allies in common tasks.

The question therefore is not of India gaining independence later but of doing something now which is of paramount importance for India's defence and help to China.

Sir Stafford Cripps and others have made out that nonviolence comes in the way. This is wholly incorrect. This never came in our way during Cripps negotiations and we discussed everything on the basis of armed defence. We told Sir Stafford that we were anxious to raise a citizen army of vast dimensions to cooperate with the regular army. Even Mahatma Gandhi has clearly stated that he expects the Government of free India to undertake armed defence. He has further even personally agreed to the presence of foreign armies in India to fight Japanese invasion and aggression and use India as a base for this provided they are here as allies of a free country. The issue thus has nothing to do with nonviolence and is purely a political and practical one: what is the best course today to defend India and help China? We are convinced that an essential prerequisite is

Indian independence. If India is to be defended effectively the present Government of India must liquidate itself and give place to the government of a free country in alliance with China, America, Russia and Britain.

I think that the close association of Russia and Britain is good both for the war and for the reconstruction after the war. I welcome therefore the Anglo-Soviet alliance. But the terms of it seem to indicate an expectation of the status quo continuing after the war.[2] That produces some apprehension in Indian minds for we want that status quo to be completely changed both politically and economically. Before the war and even since the war began India and the other countries of Asia have been ignored and treated as if they were appendages of Europe. No country in Asia is going to accept this position and this fact must be realised and acted upon. Only then will the war have meaning for the hundreds of millions of Asiatics.

2. By a treaty of alliance signed in London on 26 May 1942, Britain and the Soviet Union expressed, *inter alia*, their desire to collaborate with one another and with other "United Nations" in the peace settlement and during the ensuing period of reconstruction on the basis of the Atlantic Charter.

4. To W. J. Gallman[1]

London
December 6, 1946

Dear Mr. Gallman,[2]

I thank you for your letter of December 4th conveying to me the message of the Acting Secretary of State on behalf of the United States Government.[3] Will you please convey to him my gratitude for his interest in India's future and assure him that we shall do our utmost, as indeed we must, to establish a free, stable and peaceful India? The recent brief negotiations in London are only a part of a much longer procedure. Ultimately the decisions that will count will be made in India and I trust that these decisions will lead to the realization of India's undoubted political destiny.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Collection No. 845.00/12-2046, U.S. National Archives.
2. (1899-1980); at this time charge d'affaires in Britain; Ambassador to Poland, 1948-50, to South Africa, 1951-54, to Iraq, 1954-58; member, Faculty, Graduate School, George Washington University, 1961-80; author of *Iraq under General Nuri: My Recollections of Nuri-al-Said, 1954-1958*.
3. In his message Dean Achesan said the U.S. had long taken a sympathetic interest in the progressive realisation of India's political destiny and expressed confidence in the ability of the Indian leaders to make the vital decisions that lay ahead.

GLOSSARY

Diara	a dried up river-bed
Rikshaw-wallah	a rikshaw-puller
Salar-i-Azam	Commander-in-Chief

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(Biographical footnotes are italicized)